



CASTLE of

FRANKENSTEIN

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YEARBOOK
2000

ALL NEW

Articles

LARRY
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Castle of Frankenstein

(Annual #2)

YEARBOOK
2000

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Published by
Dennis Drukenis

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FRONT COVER: All-New FRANKENSTEIN COVER (©2000 by Larry Ivie)
INSIDE FRONT COVER/PAGE 3: Rare photo from A&C MEET FRANKENSTEIN

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FRANKENSTEIN FOCUS



FRANKENSTEIN FLASHBACKS

I've always looked forward to annuals and yearbooks of my favorite comics and monster magazines. They were almost always special and usually came out during the summer when there was plenty of time to read them.

For the most part, these annuals and yearbooks contained reprinted material so you had to be careful of what you purchased. You didn't want to waste your 23, 35 or 50¢ on something you already had read. Those quarters were a precious commodity in the 1960s. Reprints however, were great in those days especially if it reprinted older-type material because most kids didn't have a lot of money to spend or have access to back issues.

The CASTLE OF FRANKENSTEIN 1967 ANNUAL was unique and a little more special because it contained both reprint and new material. The 1967 ANNUAL would actually come out in August 1966 and CoF #9 would also appear in August. Two issues of CASTLE OF FRANKENSTEIN would be on the stands in August 1966! 1966 would also be the only year besides 1974 that 4 issues of CoF would be published during the course of a year.

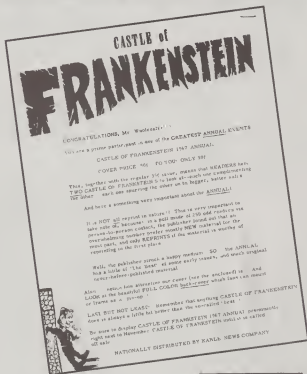
Since this is somewhat of a special year I decided to publish a yearbook (annual) that would be even more special featuring All-New material. Welcome to CASTLE OF FRANKENSTEIN YEARBOOK 2000 published in the summer of 2000 for an August 2000 release.

It has been a little over a year since we started publishing CASTLE OF FRANKENSTEIN again. While sales and interest have been okay, your LETTERS OF FRANKENSTEIN have not been pouring in as you will see in our LETTERS OF FRANKENSTEIN page elsewhere in this issue. Now is the time to send your LETTERS OF FRANKENSTEIN as we build an even better CASTLE in 2001.

It's time again to enter our CASTLE. Watch your step and keep your brain here awhile for some classic monster fun.

- Dennis J. Drukteinis

RARE PRESS RELEASE FOR 1967 ANNUAL!



CASTLE of FRANKENSTEIN



Special Thanks to Nicholas J. Certo, Larry Irie, all our writers and artists this issue and to you for purchasing this issue.



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FRANKENSTEIN

**SPECIAL
EDITION!**

movieguide

A...Special Edition "F" is for FRANKENSTEIN of the FRANKENSTEIN movieguide. Agree...disagree but READ this FRANKENSTEIN SPECIAL EDITION movieguide! The Castle is always open to discussion!

by Alan Warren

F.P.1 (70 min.-Gaumont-1932). Long-unseen sf drama of huge floating platform in mid-Atlantic used for transoceanic flights is something of a disappointment due to conventional plotline involving love triangle. Still imaginative and worth seeing, particularly for Conrad Veidt's performance in the English-language version. (French and German versions filmed simultaneously.) Based on Curt Siodmak's novel **F.P.1 DOES NOT REPLY**. Leslie Fenton, Jill Emond, Donald Crisp, Francis L. Sullivan, Warwick Ward.

FABULOUS WORLD OF JULES VERNE, THE (85 min.-WB-1961). Also known as **THE DEADLY INVENTION**. Karel Zeman's marvelous combination live action/animation version of several Jules Verne stories, done in the style of original steel engravings of 1870 Verne book by Bennett and Riou. Stories are slight, but technique is fascinating. Won Grand Prize at the Brussels International Film Festival in 1958. A must-see. Ernest Navara, Janen Zalen, Louis Locke. **FACE AT THE WINDOW, THE** (65 min.-Eros-1939). Man apparently brought back from dead. One of Tod Slaughter's fabled barnstormers; worth seeing for the inimitable Slaughter bravura, which somehow transcends mere hamminess. Marjorie Taylor, John Warwick, Leonard Henry, Harry Terry. **FACE BEHIND THE MASK, THE** (69 min.-Col-1941). Not really horror, but sentimental melodrama featuring immigrant (Peter Lorre) whose face is badly burned in hotel fire turning to crime. Well directed by Robert Florey. Evelyn Keyes, Don Boddoe, James Seay, George E. Stone, Frank Reicher. **FACE OF FIRE** (80 min.-AA-1958). Not really horror, but strange, moody piece about handyman (James Whitmore) badly disfigured while saving child from fire. Based on Stephen Crane story "The Monster." Cameron

Mitchell, Bettye Ackerman, Royal Dano, Richard Erdman, Miko Oscar, Lois Maxwell. **FACE OF FU MANCHU, THE** (96 min.-7 Arts-1965). First, and best, of Harry Alan Towers' Fu series, based on the Sax Rohmer novels, that rapidly degenerated into arant nonsense. Though politically incorrect by today's standards, it's still supremely enjoyable Yellow Peril adventurism, replete with chases, fights, hairbreadth escapes, and neat, self-spoofing sense of humor. (After melee in library, James Robertson Justice retorts, "You can't just go off and leave the floor strewn with dead Chinses!") Big shot in arm, career-wise, for Christopher Lee, since entire was built around him. With Nigel Green as the screen's finest Nayland Smith

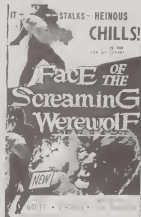
(though Peter Cushing might have proved even better in the role). Tsiu Chin, Howard-Marion Crawford, Karin Dor, Walter Rilla. TechniScope, Color.

FACE OF MARBLE (70 min.-Mono-1946). Odd, sporadically effective sf-horror piece has John Carradine restoring a dead sailor to life, then creating a vampire dog (!). Features better sets and clearer photography than the Lugosi Monograms, at least. Robert Shayne, Miris Wrixon, Claudia Drake, Willie Best.

FACE OF TERROR (83 min.-Yates-1960). Mexican horror melodrama. Disfigured girl has plastic surgery; afterward, her beauty can only be restored by special fluid. The usual, Lisa Gaye, Fernando Rey, Virgilio Teixeira, Gerard Tichy.

FACE OF THE SCREAMING WEREWOLF (60 min.-ADP-1965). Hoked-up, Americanized jumble, courtesy of Jerry Warren, of Mexican **LA CASA DEL TERROR**. Mummy (Lon Chaney) thaws out, turns into werewolf, complete with dark shirt, leading some to read this as **THE WOLF MAN**, some years on. Soon degenerates into rambling nonsense, but nice exteriors. (Story of Ed Wood filming werewolf scaling office building is probably due to confusion of Wood with Jerry Warren—not that it matters.) Linda Varle (Yolande Varela), Raymond Gaylor.

FAHRENHEIT 451 (111 min.-Univ-1966). The only successful adaptation of Bradbury to film (although certain Hitchcock episodes evoke his **DARK CARNIVAL** period surprisingly well) due to fortitude of brilliant filmmaker Truffaut, who surmounted Promethean delays in getting novel onto film, including reluctance of star Oskar Werner to act in any scenes involving fire! Pivotal role of Montag the fireman originally intended for Paul Newman, then Terence Stamp, eventually played by Werner. Dual role played by Julie Christie originally intended for Christie and Jane Fonda. All in all, a triumph, with



enormously moving final credit Bravo. Monsieur Truffaut! Superlative 21st century score by Bernard Herrmann. Cyril Cusack. Anton Diffring, Bee Duffell. Color.

FAIL SAFE (111 min.-Col-1964) Intelligent, adult drama of nuclear holocaust was completely overshadowed in the year of its release by **DR. STRANGELOVE**. Builds to nightmarish conclusion in which U.S. President (Henry Fonda) is forced to "trade" NYC for Moscow in nuclear exchange. Engrossing, literate, suspenseful, with brilliant photography and sound effects. Directed by Sidney Lumet. Excellent cast includes Dan O'Herlihy, Walter Matthau (as a right-wing senator), Fritz Weaver, Larry Hagman, Sorrell Booke, Frank Overton.

FANTASTIC VOYAGE (100 min-Fox-1966) Miniaturized submarine, complete with crew, injected into bloodstream of man in order to dissolve a blood clot in brain. Fascinating idea is hampered by conventional plot development, including silly cliché of saboteur along for ride. Once-impressive special fx now fairly standard; film also suffers from silly dialog, trite situations. Basic idea stolen from **INNER SPACE**. Stephen Boyd, Raquel Welch, Edmond O'Brien, Arthur O'Connell, Donald Pleasance, William Redfield, Arthur Kennedy. Color. CinemaScope.

FANTOMAS (61 min.-Du World-1932) Rarely-seen, little-known, stylish piece of gaudy with first half set in old dark house, with Fantomas' black-clad figure slinking about to and fro, à la The Bat. Many imaginative touches, with surprise ending. Directed by Paul Fejos. Jean Galland, Tania Fedor, Thomy Bourdelle.

FANTOMAS (104 min-Para-1966). Watty, stylish, and exciting return to Feuillade-style serial thrills, with Fantomas (Jean Marais), master of disguise, matching wits with the French police. Exciting chase climax, clever gadgetry. Louis de Funès, Mylene Demongeot, Marie-Helen Arnaud. Color. Scope.

FEAR IN THE NIGHT (min-Hammer-1973) One of Hammer's better later thrillers benefits from neat Jimmy Sangster script and good cast, though the debt to **LES DIABOLIQUES** is more obvious than ever in this twisty murder plot set in boy's school. Originally intended for filming in mid-60s under the title **BRAINSTORM**. Directed by Sangster. Peter Cushing, Joan Collins, Ralph Bates, Judy Geeson. Color.

FEARLESS VAMPIRE KILLERS, THE, OR PARDON ME, BUT YOUR TEETH ARE IN MY NECK (98 min-MGM-1967). Also known as **DANCE OF THE VAMPIRES**. Roman Polanski's comedy about vampire hunters in Transylvania was butchered by MGM executives. Still generally amusing, colorful farce, obviously influenced by Hammer's **KISS OF THE VAMPIRE**.

Holds up much better than Mel Brooks' labored and unfunny **YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN**. Original 107-minute version restored for videotape release. Jack MacGowan, Roman Polanski, Sharon Tate, Alfie Bass, Percy Mayne, Fiona Lewis, Jessie Robbins. Color, Scope.

FIEND WITHOUT A FACE (74 min-MGM-1958) Invisible force wreaking havoc at U.S. rocket base in Canada finally revealed as "thought creatures", the work of a professor They finally become visible in the last reel, prompting one of the most 'nightmarish conclusions to any sf thriller. Excellent visual effects by Florenz von Nordhoff and K.L. Rappe. Marshall Thompson, Kim Parker, Terence Kilburn, Kynaston Reeves.

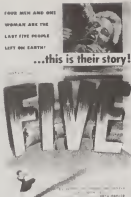
FINGERS AT THE WINDOW (80 min-MGM-1942). Basil Rathbone, as insane psychiatrist influencing hypnotized lunatics to commit as murders, is the main reason to see this minor mystery. Lew Ayres, Laraine Day, Walter Kingsford, Miles Mander.

FIRE MAIDENS FROM OUTER SPACE (68 min-Topaz-1956). One of the all-time classics, right up there with **ROBOT MONSTER** and **THE CREEPING TERROR**. Fire maidens are descendants of Atlantis survivors, sacrificed to the strains of Borodin, while viewers are sacrificed to the strains of horroredom. Film anticipates Kubrick's use of classical music in 2001 by 12 years, lending it some interest if not distinction. Anthony Dexter, Susan Shaw, Paul Carpenter, Sydney Tafler.

FIRE MONSTERS AGAINST THE SON OF HERCULES (82 min-Embassy-1962) More nonsense, released on the wake of Italian muscleman epics, concerning an Ice Age hydra-headed monster, or something. You figure it out. Reg Lewis, Margaret Lee, Luciano Martin, Myra Kent. Color.

FIRST MAN INTO SPACE (77 min-MGM-1958) Don't let the title fool you. This is grim stuff, about astronaut obsessed with being first into space returning to Earth as shambling, horrendous creature thirsting for blood - - at which point film becomes highly enjoyable. British-made. Marshall Thompson, Maria Landi, Robert Ayres, Carl Jaffe.

FIRST MEN IN THE MOON, THE (107 min-Col-1964). Average adaptation of Wells novel about inventor's trip to the moon, played more for laughs than fidelity to Wells original. As usual, benefits from A-one Harryhausen effects, though it's not a patch on **SINBAD** or **JASON**. Interesting opening gambit (lunar landing finds evidence of original landing, 70 years before) ripped off



for James Cameron's **TITANIC**. Watch closely to spot Peter Finch in unbilled cameo. Lionel Jeffries, Edward Judd, Martha Hyer, Betty McDowell, Miles Malleon. Color. Scope.

FIRST SPACESHIP ON VENUS (81 min-CI-1962). Boring story of Venus, found destroyed by atomic catastrophe. German-Polish collaboration, cut from its original 109-minute length. They should have kept cutting till there was nothing left. Yoko Tani, Oldrick Lukes, Ignacy Machowski, Julius Ongewa. TotalScope, Color.

FIVE (93 min-Col-1951). Arch (**LIGHTS OUT**) Oboler's sf drama about aftermath of nuclear destruction concerns last five people left on Earth after the bomb. Treads much the same radiation-scarred ground as **ON THE BEACH** and **THE WORLD, THE FLESH, AND THE DEVIL**, but is more effective due to somber, low-key photography. William Phipps, Susan Douglas, James Anderson, Charles Lampton, Earl Lee.

FIVE MILLION YEARS TO EARTH (97 min-Hammer-Fox-1968) Third in Hammer's great Quatermass series. Workers laboring on London underground system turn up skulls and ancient artifacts that suggest all mankind descended from Martian invaders five million years before. Imaginative, thought-provoking story by Nigel Kneale knits together most, if not all, of life's mysteries in highly original, cerebral concept. Not up to original BBC TV version due to shorter length, but still outstanding, despite director Roy Ward Baker's determination to smother audience in close-ups. With Andrew Keir as Quatermass (replacing director's original choice, Kenneth More), James Donald, Barbara Shelley, Julian Glover, Duncan Lamont. Color.

FIVE THOUSAND FINGERS OF DR. T, THE (88 min-Col-1953). Bizarre, imaginative fantasy with musical numbers scripted by none other than Dr. Seuss, about a



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small boy forced to practice piano for hours day after day by sadistic Dr. Terwilliger (Hans Conried, in his greatest role). One of a kind, with startling art direction and photography. Not completely successful, but worth a look. Tommy Rettig, Peter Lind Hayes, Mary Healy, Color.

FLAME BARRIER, THE (70 min.-UA-1958) Sometimes known as **IT FELL FROM THE FLAME BARRIER**. Slight, unimportant story of a search for a satellite in the Yucatan jungle. Clichéd, unexciting sf adventure falls far short of its original co-feature, **THE RETURN OF DRACULA**. Arthur Franz, Kathleen Crowley, Robert Brown.

FLESH AND FANTASY (94 min.-Univ-1943). Three tales - by Laslo Vaday and Oscar Wilde - of uneven quality. The Wilde one is best, though the Betty Field-Robert Cummings episode has a wonderfully poetic twist at the end. The stories are related to clubman Robert Benchley by an eager club member, played by David Hoffman, whom you may recognize as the ubiquitous head in the **INNER SANCTUM** films. Final episode deleted, released as separate film, **DESTINY** (1944). Edward G. Robinson, Charles Boyer (who also produced), Barbara Stanwyck, Thomas Mitchell, Charles Winninger, Sir C. Aubrey Smith, Edgar Barrier, May Whitty, Anna Lee, Marjorie Lord.

FLESH AND THE FIENDS, THE (85 min.-Valiant-1960). Originally entitled **MANIA**; chopped-up version known as **THE FIENDISH GHOLS**. Effective retelling of the Burke and Hare legend, with evocative recreation of 19th century Edinburgh. Peter Cushing at his best as the unscrupulous Dr. Knox, (Cushing's own favorite of his performances.) Some strong scenes of violence for the time; beware cuts. Directed by John Gilling. Well acted by Donald Pleasance, June Laverick, Dermot Walsh, VistaScope.

FLESH EATERS, THE (92 min.-CDA-1964). Gory, unpleasant story has cast stranded on island with insane scientist (Martin Kosleck - who else?) who has created flesh-eating manne creatures. Pretty unpleasant stuff up until the climax, which features a sea monster created by scratching the film with pins - an effective technique, though it comes too late in story to rescue audience from gross-out effects. Rita Morley, Byron Sanders, Ray Tudor, Barbara Wilkin. **FLIGHT THAT DISAPPEARED, THE** (72 min.-UA-1961). Resolutely routine, TV-ish sf-er about airplane that disappears into another dimension. Unrealized potential of story amid undistinguished production. Craig Hill, Paula Raymond, Dayton Lumis, Gregory Morton, John Bryant, Addison Richards.

FLIGHT TO MARS (72 min.-Mono-1951). Unimportant space exploration item for

MonoGram, about a space crew landing on Mars and finding a dying civilization (but no clips from **ONE MILLION, B.C.**, alas.) No monsters, but clichés a-plenty. Cameron Mitchell, Arthur Franz, Virginia Huston, Marquerite Chapman - and good ol' Morris Ankrum. Cinecolor.

FLY, THE (94 min.-Fox-1958). Somewhat overrated but still suspenseful tale of inventor (David Hedison) who gets his atoms mixed with housefly's in matter-transmuting machine. Not all it's cracked up to be, but still imaginative, well-mounted sf. Spawned two sequels and big-budget remake, which lack modest charm of original. (Based on the **PLAYBOY** novelette by George Langelaan, whose real-life exploits, including numerous plastic surgery jobs, is more fantastic than his fiction.) Vincent Price (in a thankless role), Herbert Marshall, Patricia Owens, Charles (13 **GHOSTS**) Herbert, Kathleen Freeman. CinemaScope, Color.

FLYING SAUCER, THE (69 min.-Film Classics-1950). Poor thriller whose only distinction is that it's the first saucer film; set in Alaska. Left us cold. Mikel Conrad, Pat Garrison, Denver Pyle.

FLYING SERPENT, THE (59 min.-PRC-1946). After getting it right the first time, PRC dusted off their **DEVIL BAT** scenario (which also saw service as **THE MAD MONSTER**) and retooled it for this opus, which features one of the more unusual 40s monsters: a giant bird, actually the Aztec god Quetzalcoatl. Vengeful, more than slightly certifiable prof (George Zucco), eager to settle debts with infidels, gives people the bird. Hardly a classic, but fun. Ralph Lewis, Hope Kramer, Wheaton Chambers.

FOG ISLAND (72 min.-PRC-1945). Nobel Prize should have gone to PRC for brilliant casting decision, teaming Lionel Atwill and George Zucco for the one and only time in this. **AND THEN THERE WERE NONE** knock-off. Plot features Zucco inviting scheming partners to his island for the weekend, then (posthumously!) mowing them down like flies. Corny, enjoyable fun. Jerome Cowan, Ian Keith, Veda Ann Borg, Sharon Douglas. **FOLLOW ME QUIETLY** (59 min.-RKO-1949). Don't miss this creepy, atmospheric suspense about a killer known as "The Judge" who only strikes during the rain. One unforgettable scene involves lookalike dummy of the killer left in a darkened room. Little-noted, truly frightening sleeper. Directed by Richard Fleischer. William Lundigan, Jeff Corey, Dorothy Patrick.

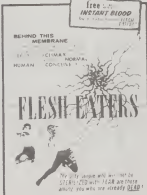
FORBIDDEN PLANET (98 min.-MGM-1956). Visually impressive, but somewhat overrated sf-adaptation of Shakespeare's **THE**



TEMPEST Big step forward for Hollywood sf nevertheless. Earth explorers land on Altair IV, find incredible power wielded by race destroyed by its own wisdom. Walter Pidgeon, Anne Francis, Leslie Nielsen, Jack Kelly, Earl Holliman, Warren Stevens, Richard Anderson, James Drury, Robby the Robot. Color, CinemaScope.

48 HOURS TO LIVE (75 min.-AIP-1959). British/Swedish sf about nuclear thieves. Probably the only sf thriller with a former world heavyweight boxing champion in the cast. Anthony Steel, Marlies Behrens, Ingemar Johansson, Lewis Charles.

4D MAN (85 min.-UA-1959). Scientist (Robert Lansing) stumbles upon formula for making matter disintegrate, finds he can walk through walls. Only drawback is he begins growing old, and can regain youth only by - yep - killing people. Conventional plot developments mars potentially intriguing



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story, but the underrated Lansing gives it his all, making the 4D Man a truly tragic figure. Lee Meriwether, Patty Duke, James Congdon, Robert Strauss, Edgar Stehli, Jasper Deeter. Color.

FOUR-SIDED TRIANGLE (81 min.-Hammer/Astor-1953). Early Hammer sf-er involving two scientists in love with the same girl (Barbara Payton) who use a duplicating machine to solve their dilemma, with dismaying results. Not really successful, but worth a look. Directed by Terence Fisher. Stephen Murray. John Van Eyssen, James Hayter, Kynaston Reeves, Percy Marmont.

FOUR SKULLS OF JONATHAN DRAKE (70 min.-UA-1959). Fair voodoo thriller has unfortunate Drake (Eduard Franz) singled out by head hunter. With the always-dependable Henry Daniell as slightly demented meddler, determined, as always, to get a head. Paul Cavanagh, Grant Richards, Valerie French, Paul Wexler.

FRANCIS IN THE HAUNTED HOUSE (80 min.-Univ-1956). Last in the Francis series,

with Mickey Rooney in the Donald O'Connor role, finds the talking mule in a seemingly haunted house. Contrived and unfunny. Virginia Welles, Paul Cavanagh, David Janssen, Richard Deacon, Timothy Carey.

FRANKENSTEIN (71 min.-Univ-1931). Not on par with the book, but most other horror films pale in comparison with this. Its truly classic status derives from Karloff's milestone performance, Colin Clive's obsessed scientist, and James Whale's direction, though it lacks Whale's characteristic humor (vestiges of the Whale wit persist in Dwight Frye's grotesque hunchback and Frederick Kerr's irascible Baron). Footage restored in 1987 includes Monster throwing "Little Eva" into the lake, and Clive's "Now I know what it feels like to be God" speech. Mae Clarke, Edward Van Sloan, John Boles, Lionel Belmore, Marilyn

FRANKENSTEIN (1930)

Harris, Michael Mark.

FRANKENSTEIN CONQUERS THE WORLD (87 min.-AIP-1966). Terrific Japanese crud about boy who ate irradiated heart of Frankenstein Monster, then grows to giant size (Hasn't Japan seen enough of these?). Directed by Inoshiro Honda. Nick Adams, Tadao Takashima, Kemi Mizuno, Yoshio Tsuchiya. Color, Scope.

FRANKENSTEIN CREATED WOMAN (92 min.-Fox/Hammer-1967). Fourth in Hammer's Frankenstein series. Having succeeded in transplanting brains, Baron Frankenstein (Peter Cushing) tries transplanting souls instead. One of the lesser series entries, though it presents Cushing's Baron with more humor and eccentricity than usual. Much better than **EVIL OF FRANKENSTEIN**. Directed by Terence Fisher. Susan Denberg, Thorley Walters, Peter Blythe, Barry Warren, Duncan Lamont. Color.



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Zacherley referees Transylvanian wrestling on



SHOCK THEATER 11:15 TONIGHT WABC-TV CHANNEL 7 featuring FRANKENSTEIN MEETS THE WOLF MAN

MOVIE—Melodrama

Shock Theater: "Frankenstein Meets the Wolf Man" (1943) The Wolf Man dips up the body of Frankenstein's monster, and the two terrorize the populace. Lon Chaney, Jr., Bela Lugosi, Patric Knowles. Zacherley discusses the workings of the "nervous system."

FRANKENSTEIN MEETS THE WOLF MAN (73 min.-Univ.-1943). Fifth in series featuring Lon Chaney at his best as doomed Larry Talbot seeking death, finding the undying Monster (Bela Lugosi) instead. Loose ends and choppy editing due to hasty post-production decision to excise Monster's dialog and blindness, rendering Lugosi's performance ludicrous. Still, the best of the 40s Frankenstein, with atmospheric graveyard opening and exciting climactic battle. Directed by Roy William Neill. Ilona Massey, Patric Knowles, Lionel Atwill, Maria Ouspenskaya, Dwight Frye, Martha McVicar. **FRANKENSTEIN MEETS THE SPACE MONSTER** (75 min.-AA-1965). Robot saves Earth. After films like this, Earth may not be worth saving. James Karen, Nancy Marshall, Robert Reilly, Marilyn Hanold.

FRANKENSTEIN MUST BE DESTROYED (95 min.-Hammer/WB-1969). Peter Cushing at his most ruthless as the Baron, transplanting brain of colleague into other body, creating a new kind of "monster" (Freddie Jones). Thoughtful, well-paced story, with fiery climax. Still not up to Hammer's best in this series. **REVENGE OF FRANKENSTEIN**. Beware cuts. Directed by Terence Fisher. Well acted by Simon Ward, Veronica Carlson, Thorley Walters, Maxine Audley, Geoffrey Bayldon. Color, Scope.

FRANKENSTEIN 1970 (83 min.-AA-1958). Great opening, but tedious sets in fast as movie crew invades Frankenstein Castle, prompting disgruntled descendant (Boris Karloff) to rig up new monster with atomic pile. Resolutely routine, with uncharacteristically blasé Karloff performance, but still of interest if only for combining two most potent names in cinema thumathurgy. Don "Red" Barry, Jana Lund, Tom Dugan, Irwin Berke. CinemaScope. **FRANKENSTEIN'S BLOODY TERROR**. See: **MARK OF THE WOLFMAN**, THE. **FRANKENSTEIN'S DAUGHTER** (85 min.-Astor-1958). It's open season on Richard Cushing, the recently somewhat mysteriously revered auteur of drek like this and **SHE DEMONS** (though the old boy did knock off the quirky, enjoyable **GIANT FROM THE UNKNOWN**). Donald Murphy (not bad as sexed-up Frankenstein descendant) creates what he thinks is female being from spare body parts, but doesn't seem to notice that resultant Monster (Harry Wilson) is unmistakably male. As Donald Willis said of **GIANT**, "Not as bad as some of Astor's pictures, but then again nothing is as bad as some of Astor's pictures." Makeup by Harry Thomas. John Ashley, Sandra Knight, Sally Todd, Harold Lloyd, Jr.

FRAU IM MOND, DIE. See WOMAN IN THE MOON, THE.

FREAKS (61 min.-MGM-1932). Horrific, one-of-a-kind Tod Browning masterpiece depicting circus freaks as gentle, loving folk... Until scheming beauty (Olga Baclanova) decides to do away with one of them. She then discovers the code of the freaks. A classic; see it. Unforgettable climax. Wallace Ford, Edward Brophy, Harry Earles, Henry Victor, Roscoe Ates, Daisy Earles, Leila Hyams, Johnny Eck, Angelo Rossitto, Prince Randim. **FRENZY** (120 min.-Univ-1972). Hitchcock in grand form, returning to England after 22-year absence, makes up for back to back failures of **TORN CURTAIN** and **TOPAZ** with this tale of necktie killer (Barry Foster)

and his unsuspecting friend (John Finch) blamed for the crimes. Neat black humor, several amazing camera shots... and one of the great last lines in cinema history. Don't miss! Script by Anthony "Sleuth" Shaffer, from Arthur LeBern's novel **GOODBYE PICCADILLY**, **FAREWELL LEICESTER SQUARE**. Alec McCowen, Billie Whitelaw, Anna Massey, Barbara Leigh-Hunt. Color. **FRIGHT** (68 min.-AA-1957). Also known as **SPELL OF THE HYPNOTIST**. Unusual plot based on then-topical gimmick: psychiatrist, employing hypnosis in public, inadvertently regresses woman to her former life. By now thoroughly discredited "Bridey Murphy" gambit given new twist: worth a look. Produced and directed by W Lee Wilder. ("Nuff said.) Nancy Malone, Eric Fleming, Dean L. Alquist, Frank Martin. **FROM THE EARTH TO THE MOON** (100 min.-WB-1958). Elaborate but only partially successful adaptation of Jules Verne novel featuring scientist Joseph Cotten and peace monger George Sanders making lunar flight in mid-19th century. Directed by Byron Haskin. Debra Paget, Patric Knowles, Don Dubbins, Henry Daniell, Melville Cooper, Carl Esmond, Morris Ankrum. CinemaScope. Color.

FROM HELL IT CAME (75 min.-AA-1957). One of the worst. Native dies, is reincarnated as ambulatory tree-trunk, finds himself pursued by single-minded dogs. See for yourself - and then remember we warned you. Tod Andrews, Tina Carver, John McNamara, Linda Watkins, Gregg Palmer, Robert Swan.

FROM THE ORIENT WITH FURY (102 min.-Les Productions-1965). Seemingly endless spy flick with numerous gadgets and a Beta ray. (You Beta off.) As *Films and Filming* remarked, "Not only is **FROM THE ORIENT WITH FURY** dreadful; it's dreadful for a very long time." Ken Clark, Philippe Hersent, Fabienne Dali, Margaret Lee. Color, Scope.

FROZEN DEAD, THE (95 min.-WB/Seven Arts-1967). Undistinguished if concerning Nazi soldiers kept on ice since war, as well as disembodied heads, arms, legs, what have you. Not one of the better decapitated head movies. Watch closely to spot Edward Fox. Made in color, but released in America in black and white. Dana Andrews, Kathleen Breck, Anna Palk, Philip Gilbert. Color.

FROZEN GHOST, THE (61 min.-Univ-1945). Fourth in the **INNER SANCTUM** series features state mentalist Gregor the Great (Lon Chaney) fearing he's killed two people with his mind. OK program, with slight plot similarity to the later (and better) **I BURY THE LIVING**. Evelyn Ankers, Milburn Stone, Martin Kosleck, Douglas Dumbrille, Tala Birell, Arthur Hohl.



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FRANKENSTEIN: THE CRYPTIC CONTINUITY

by Donald F. Glut

For those who love the old Frankenstein movies - - primarily the original black and white gems comprising the series made by Universal Pictures during the 1930s and 1940s, but also the color films of the 1950s through 1970s produced by Hammer Films - - a major source of irritation has been the apparent lack of continuity from one motion picture to the next.

In the Universal entries, how did a town's name inexplicably change from "Vasaria" to "Frankenstein"? How did the watch tower where the Frankenstein Monster was created move from the outskirts of the town of Godstadt to the Frankenstein property itself? How did Wolf Man Lawrence Talbot survive his fatal shooting with a silver bullet and what happened to Dr. Edelmann's cure of his affliction? And in the Hammer movies, why are there three vastly different looks for the original Creature?

These, and many more questions, have long demanded answering. We more cynical Frankenstein fans might be tempted to explain such annoying conundrums by accusing the studio Powers That Be, at both Universal and Hammer, of simply not caring. These are, after all, just movies, often separated from one another by years. Who could ever remember names and events from one movie to the next? Seemingly neither the studio executives nor the films' writers remembered either.

I'd wager a Frankensteinian crown or Vasarian mark that most (if not all) of us Frankenstein aficionados still cringe whenever these apparent continuity errors pop out at us, marring yet another viewing of those beloved movies.

Note that I've purposely described these errors as "apparent" for, in truth, that is exactly what they are - - at least when considered from the correct perspective.



Actually, there are no continuity mistakes in these movies! Now, before you grab your torches and pitchforks and haul me

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off to Dr. Ludwig Frankenstein's hospital for those with "Diseases of the Mind," consider my arguments. Hopefully they will put your brains (even the transplanted ones) at ease for all eternity.

In other words, there is a "cryptic continuity" in the "universes" of the Universal and Hammer Frankenstein films that the cameras have not recorded - but one that is plausible and possible, nonetheless, and for us to discover.

But first, some ground rules:

Movies made in previous decades tended to reveal more in terms of story narrative, while modern films require audiences' imaginations to fill in various "blanks." In an older film like Universal's *HOUSE OF DRACULA*, the character Dr. Edelmann gets a telephone call from Inspector Holtz, is then shown leaving his premises (perhaps even traveling toward his destination), finally arriving at the Visaria police station where, at last, he

meets the jailed Wolf Man, Lawrence Talbot. If *HOUSE OF DRACULA* were made today, the action would probably cut directly from Edelmann on the phone (not even waiting for him to hang up) to his arrival outside Talbot's cell.

Today's audiences are used to supplying such narrative gaps. (Police-type television shows often cut directly from a law officer responding to a clue to a killer's whereabouts to arriving there in the "nick of time.") To make my explanations work, we must apply our talents as modern viewers, imagining what the old Frankenstein movies did not show us.

Much, in fact, happens to the characters in the Frankenstein movies that is not revealed to us directly. In a movie we

only saw what the camera shows us, and that camera can only be in one place at any given time. Therefore, while Dr. Henry Frankenstein is busy bringing his Monster to life in the watch tower in Universal's original *FRANKENSTEIN*, other characters (e.g., little Maria, the Burgomaster and Henry's father, the old Baron Frankenstein) are elsewhere engaged in their own unseen (by us, anyway) business.

Also, events occur between each movie, sometimes over a span of more than a year. During this "down time" our imaginations must really work to "reconstruct" - based upon evidence found in the movies themselves - those events we never saw, but which explain all of those apparent continuity snafus.

We must not, however, regard certain "cosmetic anomalies" (mostly in the Universal films) as mistakes. Not always is a character appearing in more than one



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film played by the same actor. At Universal, Mae Clarke plays Elizabeth in *FRANKENSTEIN*, while Valerie Hobson enacts that same role in the sequel *BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN*; and numerous actors have portrayed the Frankenstein Monster. Indeed, the Monster's very appearance changes, sometimes drastically, due to the physical features of the actor portraying the character, or on new refinements and details introduced by the make-up artists (although one could make a case for the various mad scientists making off-screen "repairs" on the creature). Places, such as Castle Frankenstein, are influenced not only by the creativity of set designers, but also by styles and tastes in vogue when a particular movie was made. Also, both Universal and Hammer drew their talent from a "stock company" of contract

players. Thus, return of an actor to the same kind of role does not indicate a reprise of the same character (e.g., Lionel Atwill as three different police inspectors in *SON OF FRANKENSTEIN*, *HOUSE OF FRANKENSTEIN* and *HOUSE OF DRACULA*, and Michael Mark and Lionel Bellmore playing different but virtually identical roles in *SON OF FRANKENSTEIN* and *THE GHOST OF FRANKENSTEIN*, and John Carradine playing a human traveler in *BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN* and a vampire in *HOUSE OF FRANKENSTEIN* and *HOUSE OF DRACULA*).

Also, we must also ignore various so-called "bloopers" or mistakes that creep

into movies beyond anyone's control and, therefore, have no valid bearing on the plots. These include such unintentional blunders as Dracula briefly reflecting in a cabinet glass in *HOUSE OF DRACULA*, the Monster wearing actor Glenn Strange's wedding ring in a few shots in *HOUSE OF FRANKENSTEIN*, and the Monster's right electrode popping off his neck during a laboratory scene in *ABBOTT AND COSTELLO MEET FRANKENSTEIN*.

Lastly, we will not discuss footage excised from films entries including *BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN* (e.g., additional murders, only some committed by the Monster), *SON OF FRANKENSTEIN* (e.g., scenes involving actor Dwight Fyre), *THE WOLF MAN* (e.g., Talbot wrestling a bear) and *FRANKENSTEIN MEETS THE WOLF*



MAN (e.g., references to the Monster's blindness and deletion of his dialogue), this material having already been well covered elsewhere.

The above said, let us begin with the Universal Frankenstein series.

First, it is important to establish the time period and location in which this series takes place. FRANKENSTEIN appears to be set about the same time of the film's release, or 1931, as evidenced by the clothing, Elizabeth's make-up, Henry's wristwatch, etc., in some unspecified part of Germany. The time period is also unspecified, as this setting has somehow remained untouched by time. In other words, the Frankenstein "universe" is a variation on the familiar "Ruritanian" environment commonly depicted in countless romantic adventures and operettas, a vaguely set realm where

people still wear the styles of an earlier century and horses, wagons and carriages are the common vehicles of transportation. This setting is also reminiscent of the timeless Grimms fairy tales, which were never specific as to where and when they are set. In fact, the action in FRANKENSTEIN can be interpreted as occurring in 1931 - or somewhat earlier.

However, if we really wish to establish firmly the time period for FRANKENSTEIN, we must search for clues in the first three sequels - BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN, SON OF FRANKENSTEIN and THE GHOST OF FRANKENSTEIN.

In BRIDE, filmed but deleted scenes from the opening "Lake Geneva" sequence" (according to real history and the script set in 1816, before the novel FRANKENSTEIN was published) have author Mary Shelley state that she has "taken the story far into the future - and made use of developments (e.g., the telephone-like "electrical machine" and cosmic diffuser") which science will some day know - a hundred years to come." Taking Mary's statement literally, that sets the main action of BRIDE in 1916, although her "hundred years" may be an estimate meaning "approximately a century" later. The clothing in Mary's "future," like that worn by Dr. Pretorius and the villagers, seems to date earlier than 1935, when BRIDE was made, possibly as far back as the late 1800s, while that worn by the

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more fashionable Elizabeth suggest the 1920s. The skeleton of Madeleine Ernestine, disinterred by Pretorius' grave robbers as a foundation for the Bride, is identified by ghoul Karl Glutz as having "died 1899." This implies that the main events of *BRIDE* take place approximately a century after those at Lake Geneva, long enough after 1899 for Ms. Ernestine's body to decompose to a skeletal state. *BRIDE*, therefore, could be set in 1916 or earlier, or as late as the 1920s. By inference, whatever date we eventually assign to *BRIDE* basically also applies to *FRANKENSTEIN*, as *BRIDE* picks up directly from where the original movie ends.

Interestingly, the *BRIDE* screenplay does not include Karl's "died 1899" line. It does, however, have Elizabeth refer to an automobile, "I heard the car drive up,"

a line that was shot altered to "I heard the carriage drive up." Cars did exist, of course, in the early 1900s. Deleting references to them helped to maintain the film's "Ruritanian" brand of timelessness; also, there may have been a conscious effort to push this story, originally intended to be set in the 1920s or '30s, back to an earlier time period.

A car is prominently featured, however, in *SON OF FRANKENSTEIN* and, like the movie itself, it dates to 1939. The clothing in *SON*, at least that worn by the more trendy Frankenstein family members, is also of late 1930s vintage (though other characters have followed the more primitive fashion sensibilities of

their predecessors in *FRANKENSTEIN* and *BRIDE*). These details unequivocally establish the modern (i.e. 1939) setting for *SON OF FRANKENSTEIN*.

In the later sequels, characters entering the Frankenstein world from more modern environments - e.g., Lawrence Talbot from Wales and Dr. Frank Manning from England - wear clothing of the 1940s, while the local villagers and peasants continue adhering to the old styles. And the hardware has been updated. The "mad lab" devices are more modern than the "cosmic diffusers" and other electrical gadgets of the first two films, and telephones are no longer primitive "electrical machines."

This all indicates that each sequel beginning with *SON OF FRANKENSTEIN* actually takes place about the time it was filmed, despite the



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"Ruritanian"-type trappings. Additionally, Universal's *Dracula* and *Invisible Man* series of the 1930s and '40s, also *THE WOLF MAN* in 1941 - - which crossed-over with the *Frankenstein* films and also each other (e.g., *THE INVISIBLE MAN'S REVENGE* refers to *Dracula*) - - undoubtedly take place when these films were released. They feature modern automobiles, telephones, even references to World War Two, as in *INVISIBLE AGENT* and *THE MUMMY'S TOMB*. (Although Kharis the Mummy never actually appears in a *Frankenstein* movie, Universal clearly intended the adventures of these two characters to occur in the same "universe"; this is evidenced by early reports that, at least in the development stages, the studio intended to include Kharis, as well as other monsters, in *CHAMBER OF HORRORS*, the film that would become *HOUSE OF FRANKENSTEIN* and also, along with *Dracula's* son, in *THE BRAIN OF FRANKENSTEIN*, which would become *ABBOTT AND COSTELLO MEET FRANKENSTEIN*.)

Simply put, *THE GHOST OF FRANKENSTEIN* is set in 1942, *FRANKENSTEIN MEETS THE WOLF MAN* in 1943, *HOUSE OF FRANKENSTEIN* in 1944, *HOUSE OF DRACULA* in 1945, and (yes, it's part of the series) *ABBOTT AND COSTELLO MEET FRANKENSTEIN* in 1948.

Maintaining "timelessness" was most tricky during the sequels of the early through middle 1940s. The earlier *Frankenstein* movies, with their ethnic names and "Herr" burgomasters established the obvious Germanic setting. This not only sustained the traditional Gothic dating back to silent films, as our world quickly moved into the future, but avoided such real-life horrors as the Nazis and World War Two. Therefore, the Universal *Frankenstein* movies must be set in some remote, Ruritanian part of Germany unknown to or ignored by the Nazis. Furthermore, the superstitious and occult-obsessed Adolf Hitler might have thought it best to avoid altogether, areas associated with bizarre horrors such as *Frankenstein's* Monster.

SON OF FRANKENSTEIN and *THE GHOST OF FRANKENSTEIN* introduce Henry Frankenstein's two adult siblings, Wolf and Ludwig, respectively. In 1939



during the events of *SON*, Wolf seems to be no more than about 35 years old (actor Basil Rathbone being actually 47 at the time he played Wolf), having a youthful wife and very young son. Brother Ludwig, in 1942 when *GHOST* was filmed, seems considerably older than Wolf (though in reality, Sir Cedric Hardwick, who played Ludwig, was a year younger than Rathbone). Ludwig has a daughter in her twenties (actress Evelyn Ankers was then 24). Therefore, Ludwig must be in his late forties.

Henry and Elizabeth are not officially married until the storyline of *BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN* is well underway - - perhaps after the passage of a year or more, during which time the old Baron Frankenstein dies and Henry assumes that

title. The Frankensteins have no children until after the final events of *BRIDE*. For the couple to have two sons that attain middle age by the late 1930s to early '40s, their children could only have been born shortly after the climax of *BRIDE*. Doing the "monster math," this dates *FRANKENSTEIN* and *BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN* about 40 or so years before *SON* and *GHOST* - - that is, about the Turn of the Century, with any blatant 1920s and 1930s references in these films (e.g., Elizabeth's 1920s-style clothes) consequently written off as the aforementioned (and non-applicable) "cosmetic anomalies."

Incidentally, a Turn of the Century time frame for *FRANKENSTEIN* also explains the Monster's otherwise anachronistic appearance as a wax figure in *ABBOTT AND COSTELLO MEET DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE* which, based on various trappings (e.g.,





telephones, electrical fixtures, etc.) also seems set about that time. Obviously, either the Monster's fame spread rapidly as far as England, or someone from the museum vacationed near Castle Frankenstein and saw the Monster.

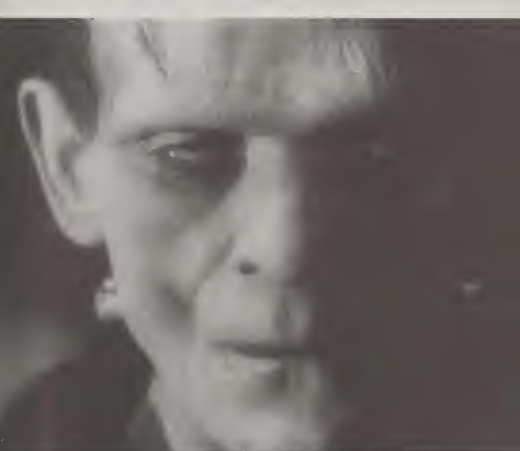
We now pause to address some undisclosed events in FRANKENSTEIN - specifically, the activities of the Monster following his murder of Professor Waldman and escape from the watch tower, but prior to his eventual appearance in Elizabeth's bedroom at Castle Frankenstein. During this transitional period we are witnesses as the Monster inadvertently kills Maria. And Henry learns from his friend Victor Moritz, "He's been seen in the hills, terrorizing the mountainside." What we do not see is that this "terrorizing" also includes the Monster tearing the arm off a

boy named Krogh who will later grow up to be the village of Frankenstein's police inspector. (Allowing that Krogh is prematurely aged in SON OF FRANKENSTEIN when he relates this story, probably because of this terrible experience and also the stress of his job, he can only have been "but a child at the time, about the age of your own son, Herr Baron" at the very start of the Monster's career.)

We move now to other "problems." In FRANKENSTEIN, contrary to some opinions, there are two towns, not one. Goldstadt is where the "Goldstadt Medical College," which Henry once attended, is located. (The name

"Goldstadt" was plainly based on "Ingolstadt," a very real college town in Germany, also the place where, in Mary Shelley's novel, Victor Frankenstein creates his Monster.) From the appearance and attitude of the students, Goldstadt is a relatively sophisticated place. Henry himself establishes that this is not the village near the Frankenstein castle in the wording of his letter to Elizabeth: "I am living in an abandoned old watch tower close to the town of Goldstadt." If the towns were one, Henry would have said something like, "I am living in the old watch tower outside the town."

Some distance from Goldstadt, overlooked by Castle Frankenstein, is the second town - in fact, a more primitive village populated by rural "Tyrolean"-and peasant-type people. It is this village



(its name revealed retroactively in the second sequel) where Hans the woodcutter brings his drowned daughter Maria in FRANKENSTEIN, and where the Monster is chained by the Burgomaster's men in BRIDE. This village is first referred to by name in SON OF FRANKENSTEIN. Here we finally learn that the village is called "Frankenstein," named, of course, after the long-established Frankenstein family. Given the resentment the villagers have in SON for Wolf von Frankenstein, Henry and their kin, it is doubtful that this naming was done after the events of FRANKENSTEIN and BRIDE.

Other unrecorded events occur around

the Frankenstein village and estate during the almost 40 years separating the first two motion pictures. Following the watch tower explosion ending BRIDE, the Monster frees himself of the rubble and clandestinely makes his way back to the neighborhood of Castle Frankenstein. As years pass, he loses his ability to speak, either due to brain or throat damage suffered during the explosion, because he prefers being mute, or, for lack of practice, he forgets how to talk.

Henry Frankenstein, around the time of

Ludwig's birth, uses a fraction of the vast family wealth to remove the rubble of the old watch tower laboratory, then relocate it on the Frankenstein property. This is not just some magnanimous attempt to atone to the people of Goldstadt for the horrors he unleashed upon them; it will also allow him, in secret and on his own "turf," to resume his unorthodox research.

Sending Elizabeth and the boys away to England, where Wolf and Ludwig will eventually begin their own medical studies (Wolf alludes to this in SON OF FRANKENSTEIN), Henry goes to work. He reconstructs the watch tower - - at least part of it, given the destructive effects of the explosion - - above the



Frankenstein family burial crypts and those ancient Roman sulfur pits. Now Henry's work is rather low key, although it still involves experiments utilizing brain transplants on corpses. Eventually, he takes on two helpers -- a scientists named Niemann (who, before he dies, will pass on what he learns from Frankenstein about brain transplants, even serving as an inspiration, to his mad brother Gustav, as related in HOUSE OF FRANKENSTEIN), and a local blacksmith looking for a second job.

The blacksmith, named Ygor, moonlights snatching bodies for Henry (who else in the region would he have been performing this grisly work for?), eventually getting caught and arrested by Inspector Krogh for his ghoulish activities. Convicted of grave robbing shortly after Henry's death (a "horrible death," as later revealed by granddaughter Elsa in FRANKENSTEIN MEETS THE WOLF MAN), Ygor is hanged. Miraculously surviving the rope, he is tossed in that old place of the dead, Frankenstein's watch tower. Now an unemployed, legally dead outcast, Ygor meets the hiding Monster, befriendng the giant, giving him a new fur vest as a token of their friendship, and finally using the creature to murder the jury members who sentenced him to the gallows.

While Wolf mostly lives in England during this period, Ludwig returns to the general area within approximately 20 years, settling in the village of Vasaria where he starts his medical practice. Ludwig is either married at the time, or marries shortly thereafter; for daughter Elsa, in FRANKENSTEIN MEETS THE WOLF MAN, comments that she remembers Vasaria's Festival of the New Wine from when she was a child. (As we never see Ludwig's wife, it is assumed that she dies somewhere within the past couple of decades.)

When Wolf returns to the family estate in SON OF FRANKENSTEIN in 1939, he does not, at first, comprehend the magnitude of Henry's achievement. He admits to Krogh that his father gave life to a dead man, although Henry's real achievement -- the creation of an artificial being from parts of different corpses -- was far more. In later years, obviously haunted by guilt over reviving the Monster, he retreats (according to brother Ludwig in GHOST) into exile.

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A note regarding the Monster's 1941 cameo appearance in the Olsen and Johnson comedy film HELZAPOPPIN, released between SON OF FRANKENSTEIN and THE GHOST OF FRANKENSTEIN. As it was illogical and impossible for the Monster to escape from the sulfur pit, travel to the United States for this brief appearance, not create some kind of a major disturbance that would undoubtedly result in his capture and probably destruction, then return to Europe and the pit, this appearance must be interpreted as merely an actor

"BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN"

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portraying the Monster as part of Olsen and Johnson's comedy presentation.

The village of Frankenstein sees much action through FRANKENSTEIN, BRIDE and SON; it is also the setting for the opening scenes in THE GHOST OF

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FRANKENSTEIN. In GHOST, the Burgomaster grants permission to the villagers to destroy the Frankenstein castle, which they promptly do.

Both the Frankenstein Monster and Ygor demonstrate their incredible physical constitutions and their bodies' natural recuperative abilities in GHOST. The Monster has survived yet another "death," the boiling sulfur that claimed him in SON cooling and solidifying, doing no more damage than destroying his fur vest (Ygor later stealing him another black jacket). Though a lightning bolt knocked him cold in SON, another - this time hitting his neck electrodes (reaffirming that adage about "lightning striking twice") - somewhat renews his strength.

Ygor, shot by Wolf in SON, also proves that his tough old body can survive bullets as well as a hangman's noose. He has

also discovered grooming: for somewhere in those three years between SON and GHOST he has managed to get some dentist to straighten his uneven teeth and a barber to trim his hair and beard.

When Ygor leaves with the Monster, all living members of the Frankenstein family have already vacated the area or died, and so there is no reason for the village to retain its accursed name. As Ygor leads the Monster off to Vasaria (note spelling) to seek "the second son of Frankenstein," Frankenstein village officials, off-camera, start legal procedures to change forever the name of their own town to something less portentous. Thus, the name of

"Frankenstein" becomes available to anyone who wants it, for whatever reason, for their own town.

Much of the action of GHOST and its sequel FRANKENSTEIN MEETS THE WOLF MAN takes place in Vasaria. It is to this village that Elsa Frankenstein, having left after the events of the previous film, returns to her hometown. The year between the two movies must have been a rather difficult for the young woman. She has been trying to forget her experiences with the Monster. Erik Ernst, the village prosecutor from GHOST and her former fiancée, is nowhere to be seen. And somehow she's picked up a regional accent.

Strangely, the ruins of Ludwig Frankenstein's house seem to have transformed into those of a castle on a hill, although the burning building that





collapsed on the Monster at the end of **THE GHOST OF FRANKENSTEIN** was established in that film as a chateau on flat ground. These severe changes seem to have a more practical basis than those

aforementioned concessions to designer's tastes and current vogues. The fact is that



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these are basically Gothic-style movies and castles on hills are a part of the Gothic tradition. Every entry in the Universal Frankenstein series has a castle (or at least a building suggesting one) in which major scenes are played, therefore one was incorporated into the plot of **FRANKENSTEIN MEETS THE WOLF MAN**: Ludwig's house was not a castle in **GHOST** for a simple reason: The major opening sequence of that movie takes place at Castle Frankenstein in the Frankenstein village; a second castle in Vassaria would have been redundant. Regardless of the look and setting for this building, the story continuity remains basically intact, the ruins representing the Frankenstein home where the Monster was apparently last "destroyed."

Before continuing, some points are in order regarding the Wolf Man, who,

following his first appearance in **THE WOLF MAN**, becomes a major player in Universal's Frankenstein movies: That original film establishes that Lawrence Talbot's transformation into a werewolf basically starts from his barefeet up. The first time we see Talbot change he is wearing a white T-shirt. The fully transformed Wolf Man is next observed clad in the character's trademark dark shirt, which would require human hands to put on and button. As we shall see, his hands are almost always the last (see later concerning the Wolf Man's condition in **ABBOTT AND COSTELLO MEET FRANKENSTEIN**) to metamorphose. This also implies that, until his hands are

fully transformed, Talbot also retains enough human intelligence to remember how to dress. (The Wolf Man's predecessor in **WEREWOLF OF LONDON**, in the same "universe" by nature of the same basic werewolf mythology, keeps enough intelligence after the transformation to don clothes and actually talk.)

In **FRANKENSTEIN MEETS THE WOLF MAN**, Talbot repeats his clothes-changing feat in the Cardiff hospital. He changes (we don't see his hands during the transformation) to werewolf form in hospital garb and is next seen prowling the streets clad in his standard dark outfit. The final proof for this "hand last" hypothesis can be seen in **HOUSE OF FRANKENSTEIN**. When Talbot metamorphoses in front of a dresser mirror, he leaves the room transformed --





except for his still human hands, which have become Wolf Man hands by the time he gets outside. In a laboratory scene in **ABBOTT AND COSTELLO MEET FRANKENSTEIN**, Talbot gazes out the window; from there the scene cuts to the full moon, then to a close shot of his already-changed hands, finally panning up to his werewolf face. This suggests that Talbot's feet change while he is looking at the moon, that his face changes while we see the moon, and that, once again, his hands - - although we see them before we see his face - - transform last. (When the lycanthropic spell is over, however, Talbot's body transforms in its entirety all at once, as shown when his ice-thawed body returns to human form in

HOUSE OF FRANKENSTEIN.)

Talbot's "magical shoes" are less easy to explain. The Wolf Man is almost always shown barefoot, his lupine feet part of the character's overall image. In **THE WOLF MAN**, Talbot is shown removing his shoes before undergoing his change; in **FRANKENSTEIN MEETS THE WOLF MAN** it is a barefoot Wolf Man that plunges into the ice cavern beneath the Frankenstein ruins, but a shoe-wearing Talbot who is lead by the Monster through those ruins; and in **ABBOTT AND COSTELLO MEET FRANKENSTEIN**, Talbot in the woods,

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still wearing shoes, turns into a barefooted Wolf Man. How do Talbot's shoes mysteriously disappear and reappear? The explanation must be an arcane one somehow founded upon the very supernatural nature of Talbot's werewolf curse - some unknown power that can materialize, dematerialize and apparently even teleport human-manufactured wearing apparel (this explanation is also applicable to Dracula's vanishing or metamorphosing clothing when he turns into a bat or wolf).

Why does Talbot transform into a "human wolf" rather than a "full wolf," as had Bela the Gypsy (who, in biting Talbot before he died, passed on his werewolf curse in *THE WOLF MAN*)? By examining Universal's various "man into wolf" movies, and also by referring to actual legends (in which werewolves can appear as anything from crazed humans to entire wolves), we find that the werewolf phenomenon can manifest itself in various degrees of transformation. It is interesting to note that most "real" werewolf traditions do not mention a full moon as a catalyst for the transformation. Surprisingly, there is no full moon shown in *THE WOLF MAN*, nor is there a mention of one (the "werewolf poem" in this film only refers to "the autumn moon"); not until *FRANKENSTEIN MEETS THE WOLF MAN* does the full moon become an official part of the Wolf Man's mythology.

The lycanthropes in *WEREWOLF OF LONDON* are of the "human wolf" variety; their faces, however, retain much of their human appearance after transforming. The fake werewolf of the later *SHE-WOLF OF LONDON* does not even attempt disguising herself with hair or fangs, the implied change apparently more mental or spiritual than physical. Furthermore, the werewolf curse is associated with vampiric powers (e.g., the Count becoming a wolf in *DRACULA*). According to Serbian tradition, a werewolf in life becomes a vampire after death. Perhaps, then, if ever finding the death he sought for so long, Talbot might have emerged from the grave as one of the undead.

Criticism of *FRANKENSTEIN MEETS THE WOLF MAN* has been raised to ask how Larry Talbot and the Gypsy Maleva travel from Cardiff, England to Vassaria, Germany by wagon. Really there is no



Lon Chaney, Ralph Bellamy,
Sir Cedric Hardwicke star in

THE GHOST OF FRANKENSTEIN

A TV First-Run!

Scientists war to control Monster
when it strips its gears.



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problem here at all. When Talbot enters Maleva's camp he clearly states that he has searched for her "all over Europe." By "Europe," Talbot means the continent itself, indicating that he has already crossed the English Channel.

FRANKENSTEIN MEETS THE WOLF MAN ends with Vasek, the busybody village innkeeper, blowing up the dam, not only presumably destroying both

Frankenstein's Monster and the *Wolf Man* during their climactic battle, but also endangering the lives of the British scientist Dr. Mannering, Elsa and Maleva. For this reason, following the movie's fade out, Vasek is almost immediately arrested for possible murder (of Lawrence Talbot), attempted murder (of Mannering, Elsa and Maleva), damage of private property, endangerment to the community, unlawful use of explosives, and various other charges. Naturally, he is convicted for at least some of these crimes, serving time in Neustadt Prison



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where he encounters Dr. Gustav Niemann, jailed for giving a dog a human brain. The mad scientist learns from the boastful Vasek the events that had recently transpired in Vasaria (including the resting place of the Monster and Wolf Man) which he later, in *HOUSE OF FRANKENSTEIN*, relates to Talbot.

Believing the Monster finally destroyed, Elsa (in scenes we don't see) decides to remain in Vasaria, this time settling down with her new love, Frank Mannering. Guaranteed that no more monsters will be brought to life in their town, the people of Vasaria respond positively to the pretty and charismatic Elsa, get to like her, and finally, as suggested by the Mayor, agree to rename their town "Frankenstein" in her honor (a better name might have been "Neu Frankenstein").

Two years later, Dr. Niemann, accompanied by the hunchback Dandel, escapes from Neustadt Prison and gets illegal possession of Professor Bruno Lampini's traveling "Chamber of Horrors." Among the exhibits is the actual staked skeleton of the vampire Count Dracula, which Lampini, sometime prior to 1944, "borrowed" from Castle Dracula in the Carpathian Mountains.

Now some notes concerning Dracula, who, like the Wolf Man, also figures significantly in Universal's Frankenstein mythos: The original *DRACULA* ends in 1931 with the Count destroyed by a wooden stake pounded through his heart by Professor Van Helsing. Dracula's corpse is not shown to revert to bones following this act, remaining uncorrupted even five years later, as verified in the sequel *DRACULA'S DAUGHTER*. Notably, the titled character in that film, Countess Zaleska, when she is fatally impaled by the wooden shaft of an arrow, also does not decompose, though she has been a vampire for at least a century; this implies, as later films will reveal, that Universal's vampires are reduced to skeletons only by fire or the sun's rays.

In *DRACULA'S DAUGHTER*, the Countess burns her father's impaled remains, then, unable to shirk her vampiric nature, returns to the family castle in Transylvania. What we are now shown, however, is that the flames did not entirely consume the Count's body, but left his articulated bones (and Van Helsing's stake) intact; nor are we show



Zaleska respectfully taking his skeleton back with her to Transylvania to its final resting place, only to be found years later, still impaled by that same stake, by



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Lampini.

In 1943 in *SON OF DRACULA*, Dracula's male offspring, going by the name of "Alucard," has his brief (and final) adventure in the United States. Although it has become almost the norm during the past few decades to regard "Alucard" as the old Count himself rather than his son, this interpretation is not correct. The movie's title constitutes evidence as to "Alucard's" position in the Dracula family. "Alucard" is identified in the film by a character uncertain as to the vampire's true identity, as either the original Count or his descendant. Most importantly, this movie (which begins with the vampire simply showing up in North America and ending with his destruction by sunlight) stands alone, not otherwise fitting into the continuity of *DRACULA, DRACULA'S DAUGHTER* or the later *HOUSE OF FRANKENSTEIN*. And fourth, this



vampire (because of his youth?) does not have all the weaknesses of his father and sister (e.g., he shows a reflection in a mirror) and has at least one unique power, transforming into a mist, which they are never shown to possess. Although one character says, "He's not Count Alucard, he's Count Dracula," remember that Dracula is a last or family name. Just as Henry Frankenstein, Elizabeth Frankenstein and Ludwig Frankenstein can all correctly be called "Frankenstein," so are Count Dracula, Countess Zaleska and Count "Alucard" all named "Dracula."

The original Dracula returns in *HOUSE OF FRANKENSTEIN* with at least one new vice: Now he drinks wine. In *DRACULA*, the Count tells castle guest Renfield, whom he is plainly toying with at that moment like a spider with a fly,

that he "never" drinks wine. This also implies either something about his personal taste in beverages, or that, as far as alcohol is concerned, the vampire is currently "on the wagon." When he imbibes wine in *HOUSE OF FRANKENSTEIN*, his motives are rather different. Not only is he trying to pass himself off as the human "Baron Latos," but he doesn't want to appear rude (by refusing the wine of the Hussian household) to the desirable young newlywed Rita.

Following the Count's destruction by the rising sun in *HOUSE OF FRANKENSTEIN*, Dr. Niemann and Daniel drive the "Chamber of Horrors"



wagons into the area where the Monster and Wolf Man were swept away by the rushing waters of *FRANKENSTEIN MEETS THE WOLF MAN*. This is the recently re-christened village of Frankenstein, formerly Vasaria, where Elsa and Mannering presumably now happily live (although the camera does not show this). By now the residents of

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the new Frankenstein are much embarrassed by the stigma of Vasak, one of their own people after all, perpetrating so heinous an act. Thus, a gendarme explains away the ruins of the Frankenstein property by simply stating that "the dam burst and swept the Wolf Man and Frankenstein Monster to their destruction."

Niemann and Daniel encounter a band of Gypsies camped near the Frankenstein ruins. Remember that Maleva mysteriously disappears near the end of FRANKENSTEIN MEETS THE WOLF MAN a year earlier, and is last seen in these ruins. The Gypsy band in HOUSE OF FRANKENSTEIN could, then, be her own having tracked their beloved senior member to this area; or, this could be a different band altogether which takes her in. Either way, we now have a plausible

explanation as to how the Gypsy girl Ilonka knows that ubiquitous "werewolf poem," which is part of the United Kingdom's folklore.

Dr. Niemann's hometown - to which he finally returns, taking along Daniel, Talbot, the Frankenstein Monster and Ilonka - is in "Visaria" (note the subtly different spelling). It is not uncommon in some European countries to have towns and villages with similarly-spelled names (e.g., in Germany the towns of Frankenstein, Falkenstein, Frankenthal and Frankfurt). "Visaria," therefore, is not "Vasaria" but another town altogether, and unlike that other town, it must be located in the northern part of the

ALL TOGETHER! ALL NEW SENSATIONS!



country, as, in the forthcoming HOUSE OF DRACULA, it will be shown to be a seacoast town.

Certainly, Dr. Niemann is well described as a "mad scientist." Among his crazy plans for revenge is to give one of Strauss, one of the men who's testimony sent him to prison, the brain of the Wolf Man. Niemann explaining that the

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transplantation will therefore turn his foe into a werewolf. In reality, this operation would leave Strauss stone-cold dead while Talbot's consciousness would simply occupy a new but older body. A saner scientist would have known better.

Both Dracula and the Wolf Man inexplicably show up again in *HOUSE OF DRACULA* with nary a scratch after apparently suffering permanent demises in *HOUSE OF FRANKENSTEIN* - - Dracula reduced to bones by the rays of the sun, the Wolf Man shot with a "silver bullet ... fired by someone who loves him enough to understand." In the Wolf Man's case, an explanation for his survival are relatively simple: Ilonka, in the excitement of the werewolf's attack on her, misses firing the bullet into a vital spot ... or the bullet goes clean through his body. Whichever, the bullet obviously does some damage, knocking the Wolf Man unconscious and spurring his change back to human form, but does not kill him.

The Count's survival is more complicated. Remember that, when watching a movie, we are only privy to what narrative information the camera records. In *HOUSE OF FRANKENSTEIN*, when Dracula meets his doom by the sun's rays, we only see his hand dissolving away to bones. Then the camera cuts away to Tony, the young hero, and the gendarmes rescuing Tony's new wife Rita whom the vampire had placed under his spell. Had the camera remained on Dracula and shown him to us entirety, we would know how he escaped his final destruction.



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Only Dracula's arm and hand are exposed to the direct rays of the sun, the rest of his body taking shelter behind the coffin. Off-camera using his cape as a protective shield, the Count, despite the agony of the sunlight and the bony condition of his arm and hand, manages to get back inside his coffin and shut the lid. Fortunately this is a remote area, Tony and the others having already left tending to Rita. Here the vampire remains unmolested until sunset, after which he emerges from his casket and secrets it away. It takes Dracula about a year to regenerate dully his tissues - - just in time to enter the plot line of *HOUSE OF DRACULA*.

The title *HOUSE OF DRACULA* actually refers to the castle of Dr. Franz Edelmann which, like Niemann's old house, is also situated in Visaria. The Frankenstein Monster is among the

demizens inhabiting Edelmann's castle, and how he ends up there is well documented in the movie. Why a kindly doctor like Edelmann possesses the laboratory apparatus required to revive the Monster is not explained, however, which means we must again consider events that occur during the year separating *HOUSE OF FRANKENSTEIN* from *HOUSE OF DRACULA*.

Dr. Niemann dies, carried into the quicksand by the Monster, at the end of *HOUSE OF FRANKENSTEIN*. Leaving behind no heirs (his brother died before passing on Henry Frankenstein's brain-transplantation secrets, his possessions, including a big house and everything inside it, soon go up for public auction. Fascinated by Niemann's collection of fantastic gadgets and gizmos, his naturally inquisitive neighbor Dr. Edelmann, the only bidder, purchases and installs the equipment in his own laboratory, possibly to use in some future experiment.

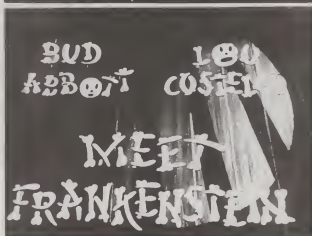
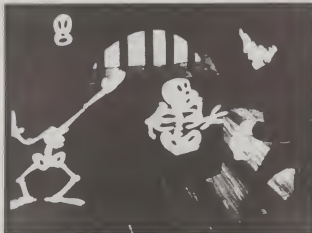
HOUSE OF DRACULA reflects the



world's increasing cynicism and lack of belief in things supernatural resulting from the "growing up" we did during the Second World War (an attitude also responsible, at least in part, for the genre of film noir). In this sequel, the supernatural origins of the Count and the Wolf Man, gospel since those characters were introduced in 1931 and 1941, are explained away scientifically. (Other monsters introduced by Universal Pictures around this time also had science- or reality-based origins, e.g., the Ape Woman, Creeper and "SHE-WOLF OF LONDON.") Does this mean that it now requires something different from the old book of monster-destroying rules -- something based in science -- to lay these creatures to rest forever?

Actually, Dr. Edelmann, a brilliant man of science, is wrong in his theories regarding the origins of Dracula and the Wolf Man. Surely the origins of these characters are clearly based in the supernatural and not science, as emphasized in all of these films excluding *HOUSE OF DRACULA*, and demonstrated by such unscientific phenomena as their vanishing and transforming clothes. More plausibly than contributing to the ends of these characters' careers, the scientific experiments of Dr. Edelmann on Dracula and the Wolf Man contribute to their inevitable survival and subsequent swansong reappearance in *ABBOTT AND COSTELLO MEET FRANKENSTEIN*.

Recall that in *HOUSE OF DRACULA* the vampire Count is again completely reduced to bones by the rays of the sun. This time, however, he is already smuggled inside his casket when the deadly solar rays strike. If that does not offer him at least some protection, the chemicals injected into him by Dr. Edelmann -- intended to make him human again -- do affect his remains. We are not shown how, after Edelmann leaves the cellar, Nina, the hunchbacked nurse, dutifully goes downstairs to close Dracula's coffin. Now protected entirely from the sun's ray, with the doctor's drugs having a retroactive effect, the Count -- abandoned and forgotten as the climactic events of *HOUSE OF DRACULA* unfold -- begins his gradual process of regeneration. The process complete, the mostly "back to normal"



Dracula salvages the alive but severely weakened Frankenstein Monster from the rubble of Dr. Edelmann's castle and prepares for his later trip to the United States in the Abbott and Costello film.

Although the curse of lycanthropy has in theory been lifted from the Wolf Man by more of Dr. Edelmann's amazing science, this miracle cure proves to be only temporary. Besides, this wouldn't be the first time some doctor's attempt to cure

Talbot didn't "take." During the operation in which Edelmann relieves the pressure on Talbot's skull that supposedly contributes to his transformations, the doctor warns that "He must be kept quiet. Any exertion could undo everything I hope we've accomplished." As it is unlikely that a man like Talbot could go through the rest of his life without "any exertion," it is not surprising when he returns, werewolf curse and all, in *ABBOTT AND COSTELLO MEET FRANKENSTEIN*.

Dr. Edelmann's experiments actually do





work, at least to some minor extents, on our three classic fiends. Some of their effects, in fact, seemingly last for at least three years, carrying over into ABBOTT AND COSTELLO MEET FRANKENSTEIN. In this last entry in the series, Dracula - - perhaps slightly more "human" than before - - in two deliberately staged scenes now casts (as do mortal humans and also his younger son) a mirror reflection. The Wolf Man, when biting Chamber of Horrors owner McDougal, apparently does not pass on his werewolf curse (unless there remains some unfilmed "sequel" out there that some other writer might care to tackle), perhaps an after effect of Edelmann's operation; and when Talbot undergoes his change in the woods, his face and hands transform simultaneously. Finally, Frankenstein's Monster, made stronger

than he's ever been by Edelmann with "the strength of a hundred men," has not only had his physical strength boosted by the mad doctor but also his courage and intelligence. For in ABBOTT AND COSTELLO MEET FRANKENSTEIN, the Monster not only steps bravely into the flames of the blazing pier, he has also remembered how to speak.

A final comment regarding ABBOTT AND COSTELLO MEET FRANKENSTEIN: Just which Invisible Man is it that makes his cameo disappearance at the end of the film? Naturally, this can only be a somewhat older Geoffrey Radcliffe from the first "invisible" sequel, THE INVISIBLE

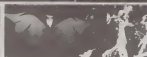


MAN RETURNS, who has apparently risked the insanity-inducing properties of the invisibility drug "duocaine" "to get in on the excitement." Unlike Radcliffe, the original character, the eventually mad scientist Jack Griffin in THE INVISIBLE MAN'S REVENGE, both perish at the ends of their respective movies; good-guy relative Frank Griffin in INVISIBLE AGENT apparently gives up his invisible

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career following his wartime adventure fighting the Axis; and this is certainly not the titled character of **THE INVISIBLE WOMAN** with a deeper voice. Also, the character in both this Abbott and Costello film and **RETURNS** sounds the same (both voiced by actor Vincent Price). It would be, of course, be an entirely new character who does "get into the excitement" three years after **MEET FRANKENSTEIN** in **ABBOTT AND COSTELLO MEET THE INVISIBLE MAN**, a film sharing continuity with the original **INVISIBLE MAN** and its sequels.

Unlike Universal's Frankenstein movies, those made by Hammer Films have paid only a modicum of attention to continuity. Most of the Hammer Frankenstein entries can more or less stand on their own and enjoyed out of sequence. The biggest

problems with the Hammer movies are how **THE EVIL OF FRANKENSTEIN** and **THE HORROR OF FRANKENSTEIN**, which diverge so drastically from the other entries, fit into the series.

To understand the problems of **EVIL** we must consider the character of Baron Victor Frankenstein himself. In the first of the Hammer series, **THE CURSE OF FRANKENSTEIN**, Victor is shown telling the story of the "Creature" to the priest in his prison cell while awaiting execution for murder. In the flashback that makes up most of the film's narrative, we see the Baron and an assistant bring to life a Creature (played by Christopher



Lee) having its own distinctive look.

In **EVIL**, in another flashback sequence related by the Baron to his assistant Hans, a much different-appearing Creature (played by Kiwi Kingston) comes to life, Frankenstein accomplishing this scientific feat with no one's help. After this flashback, the Baron discovers this version of his Creature entombed in ice.

We clearly have here two similar though



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different accounts of Baron Victor Frankenstein bringing to life his Creature ... one with the Baron aided by an assistant, the other with him working solo, and with two very different Creatures. Which account is true? Actually, in a way, both of them; but both versions are dependent on the Baron's personality, which includes his having a tremendous ego and a tendency to deviate from the truth when it suits him (e.g., his frequently change of name).

The Baron's primary motive in **THE CURSE OF FRANKENSTEIN** for telling his story is in hope that the clergyman will believe him innocent of the murders committed by the Creature and, consequently, saves his life. At the same time, however, Frankenstein oddly admits to murdering Professor Bernstein for his brain and engineering the killing of

servant Justine by the Creature (perhaps being unable to resist an urge to boast of these clever machinations). For reasons known only to himself, Frankenstein lies about the Creature's final fate, inventing the story of its destruction in the acid vat. The priest, then, leaves the cell remembering Victor's story of an experiment performed by two men, while conjuring up his own mental image of the Creature's (the Lee incarnation) appearance. What we see in this extended flashback, then, is basically "true" - although, as we will later see, the Creature (the Kingston version) looks nothing like the image created in the priest's imagination and is not dissolved in acid.



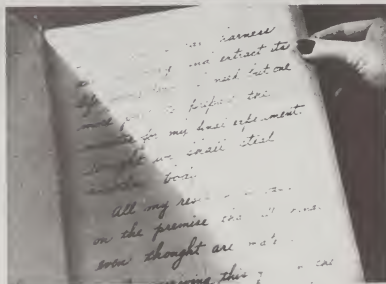
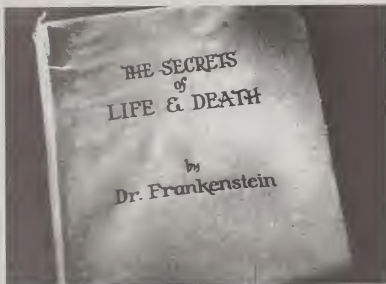
THE WOLFMAN - LON CHANEY

In **THE EVIL OF FRANKENSTEIN**, the Baron relates his story, albeit in a somewhat disorted flashback version to a colleague he is trying to impress. Frankenstein does this by lying again, describing how he alone gave life to the Creature, thereby sharing with nobody the glory of his great scientific accomplishment. In this account, however, the Baron does not claim that

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the Creature was destroyed by acid. Because the Creature (Kingston) is later seen in person by Hans looking exactly as he does in the flashback, this is the character's true appearance.

In other words, the events of Victor's flashback story in *CURSE* are essentially true (the most notable exception being the acid bath ending), although the Creature's physical look is incorrect; while in *EVIL*, although the events have been much revised, the Creature's appearance is accurate.

This only leaves *THE HORROR OF FRANKENSTEIN*, which is basically a remake of *CURSE*, retaining the acid bath destruction but depicting a remake of *CURSE*, retaining the acid bath destruction but depicting a markedly different version of the Creature (played by Dave Prowse). Fitting this movie into

the rest of the series is simultaneously quite easy and yet impossible. Again, this requires some "filling in the blanks" by considering what happens outside the Baron's cell as he relates his story to the priest, and what happens after *CURSE* ends.

Actually, the priest is not the only person to hear the Baron's fantastic tale. It is also heard by a guard, who is stationed just outside the cell door. The guard, of course, imagines his own version of the Creature. Telling what he overheard to a friend, the story gets distorted ... then again, as the tale is passed on to another and another. One of these later recountings of the tale constitutes what

we see in *THE HORROR OF FRANKENSTEIN*.

And so, there really are no conundrums, no continuity mistakes, to spoil the enjoyment of those Universal and Hammer Frankenstein movies. At least not anymore. (I'll leave it to some other writer to work out the annoying "apparent" continuity problem in Universal's "Mummy" series.) So, let's thread up those movie projectors and slip in those videotapes and DVDs, sit back and enjoy. And if any apparent continuity errors come our way, well, they can be eliminated. All it takes is some research and a bit of imagination.

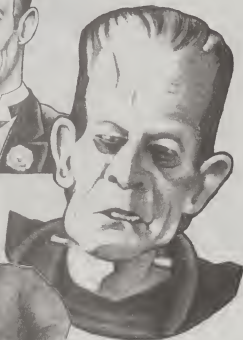


Frank Dietz's The Sketch Files Presents

FRANKENSTEIN

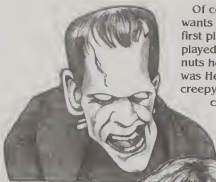
Colln Clive as
Henry "It's Alive!"
Frankenstein,
who stitches
together the
uncanny Boris
Karloff, jump-
starts his hard
drive and then
knows what it
feels like to be
God...

God, however,
begs to differ ..



...and all too soon Henry's
creation is slam-dunking him
from the top of the old windmill,
beginning a tragic and
inescapable legacy for future
Frankensteins to endure...



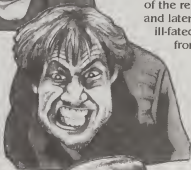


Of course, all the misunderstood Monster wants is friendship. But who does he get for his first play-date? Twisted errand boy Fritz, played by **Dwight Frye** with a few of the leftover nuts he stored as Renfield in *Dracula*. What was Henry Frankenstein thinking? With this creepy little toad as babysitter, all hope of this creature being socially gifted went right out the laboratory window...

The Monster settles the score by making a festive *piñata* out of the repulsive hunchback, and later heads out for an ill-fated lesson in buoyancy from little **Marilyn Harris**.

As for Dwight Frye, he returned in the sequel as Karl, a different but equally unpleasant assistant...and is once again whacked by Karloff's Monster, who drops him like a dirty diaper from the penthouse suite of the Frankenstein Marriott...

Frank F. Dietz



The Sketch Files are excerpted from the book *The Things Remain Sketchy* by Frank F. Dietz.

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FRANKENSTEIN

Book Reviews

FRANKENSTEIN

by Mary Shelley

Originally published in 1818. Available in a special hard cover edition from Barnes and Noble Books for \$5.98 or in several different paperback editions for about the same price. Also available online.



the ceremony of marriage.

Not to be outdone by the uncommon folks around her, Claire Clairmont may have been Percy's secret lover. She was involved in an affair with Lord Byron, the poet, at the time of the trip to Switzerland and may have already been pregnant by him. Although Percy, Mary and Claire took up household in a neighboring cottage. Lord Byron's residence at the Villa Diodati on Lake Geneva was their ultimate destination.

Quite a little group. Friends, lovers, poets. It's no wonder the tale of a tormented creature was a product of so many unconventional entanglements.

One evening during a raging thunderstorm, Byron challenged the Shelleys and his physician John Polidori to write a ghost story. (James Whale, the film director, forever immortalized the gathering of friends when he included the event as introductory material to the classic horror movie, *THE BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN*.) At first, Polidori was the only one to rise to Byron's literary challenge. The very next day he began a tale which eventually became *THE VAMPIRE*, the first modern vampire story. Neither Percy nor Lord Byron himself was able to write anything memorable. Despite his own lack of effort, Byron continued to urge his companions forward. Mary was initially uninterested in the endeavor, preferring to wait for more inspiration before she

Mary Shelley

FRANKENSTEIN



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started to write. Eventually though, following a particularly deep discussion on whether life could be created by man alone, she took up her pen in earnest and began her tale about a manmade monster. Amazingly, she completed *FRANKENSTEIN*, her first novel, less than a year later at the age of twenty.

Three versions of the book have actually seen publication. The first was published anonymously in 1818. Percy Shelley organized that edition and wrote a brief preface for it which erroneously sounded as if he wrote the entire book. Five years later, in 1823, the second publication of *FRANKENSTEIN* corrected that misunderstanding and identified Mary as the author. Percy's preface, however, continued to be a part of the book. The definitive version was finally published in 1831 and included significant revisions to the original text. Mary Shelley added an introduction to the 1831 edition and described how the story came into existence.

Shelley employed a narrative within a narrative to tell her story, beginning and ending with letters home from Robert Walton, an eighteenth century sea captain

Reviewed by Joseph C. Romano

Everyone probably knows the story of Frankenstein's birth, the book I mean, not the creator of a well-known monster. Mary Shelley began writing *FRANKENSTEIN, OR THE MODERN PROMETHEUS* during a soggy summer trip to Switzerland with her husband, Percy. The Shelleys had traveled to Switzerland in May, 1816, along with Mary's stepsister, Claire Clairmont.

It was a strange trip making the journey, far from their homeland of England. At the age of sixteen, after only knowing Percy Shelley for two months, Mary had run away from home to live with him. Percy had been unhappily wedded to Harriet Westbrook since 1811. Harriet was the daughter of a wealthy baronetcy, a relatively low member of British nobility, and the heir to a small estate. Percy Shelley was a political radical with a strong social consciousness, and although Harriet shared certain political ideals with her husband, their attraction waned almost as soon as it had developed. Interestingly, Harriet and Percy eloped when she was only sixteen, too.

Less than two years after Percy and Mary met, Harriet committed suicide in London under mysterious circumstances. At the time of her death, Harriet was pregnant by another man. She had previously given birth to two of Percy's children. Following Harriet's tragic death, Percy and Mary quickly consummated their illicit union through



and Arctic explorer. Walton is bound for icy northern seas looking for an open passage through the Pole when he rescues Victor Frankenstein from the irregular plains of ice slowly entrapping Walton's ship.

Victor is near death as Walton's crew pulls him from a sledge precariously balanced atop a ragged ice drift. Over the next few days, Victor's strength gradually returns and a strange friendship develops between the Captain and the wayward child of the ice.

The narrative shifts from Walton to Frankenstein as the hapless Victor tells his tale of woe. While a student of natural philosophy Victor discovered the secret of life. In his quest for esoteric knowledge he was compelled to confirm his hypotheses by creating a living man. Unfortunately, the young student was immediately horrified at the sight before him and fled the artificial man he made instead of helping the poor creature emerge from conception.

Here, at this pivotal moment in Victor Frankenstein's life, the visual elements of all movie versions of the Frankenstein legend are vastly superior to the word pictures painted in the book. As Victor Frankenstein isolates the metaphysical "spark of life," Mary Shelley glosses over his discovery with only a hint of how it was made. Rather than speculate on how Frankenstein breathes life into a cadaver, Shelley cloaks the revelation in the dark veil of secrecy. It is a disappointing moment in an otherwise memorable book.

Why would Mary Shelley ignore this tense moment in Victor's life? Merely touching the surface instead of delving deeper into it? Because FRANKENSTEIN is a story of ideas, not necessarily action. Filled with extensive rhetoric that sometimes borders on the sentimental, Shelley was exploring the limits of human desire and the bounds of earthly life. Like the ancient Greek tale of PROMETHEUS, who paid a heavy price for stealing fire from the gods and giving it to man, Shelley's characters also paid a heavy tariff for breaking the chains enslaving mankind. Victor Frankenstein and his monster were both victims of the same crime against the gods, each damned to an eternity of despair like their ancient mythological namesake.

Confused and bewildered by the rejection of his birth, the monster wanders

for months through the countryside. The monster learns to read and write through weeks of spying on a blind man and his poor family. Eventually, the creature works up the courage to meet the blind man when the other members of his family are in the woods searching for wild berries. Unfortunately, the others return unexpectedly. Abhorred at the creature's hideous features, they rebuff the monstrosity and abandon their cottage (and the monster, too). Rejected again and not knowing what else to do, the monster seeks out the home of his creator.

Still unable to gain the affection of Victor, the monster demands a mate to ease his pain and torment. At first Victor acquiesces to threats from the monster and reluctantly undertakes his experiments again, hoping that by providing a companion for the creature he will leave him alone forever. Later Victor fears that with the help of a bride the monster could become stronger and cause others as much suffering as the monster himself has seen. Haunted because the monster has murdered already, Victor ends his experiments and refuses to meet his creation's needs. The monster then wreaks his terrible revenge.

FRANKENSTEIN is sometimes called the first science fiction novel ever written. Although a magnificent and thoughtful tale, it is certainly not science fiction in any real sense of the genre. Mary Shelley was well read in the philosophers of her day. She was one of the major English Romantics, whose work expressed and extreme sense of the self and relied on heavy layers of transcendental imagery. A person of Mary's great intelligence would also have been familiar with the scientific



A 1967 Bantam Pathfinder Edition of FRANKENSTEIN.

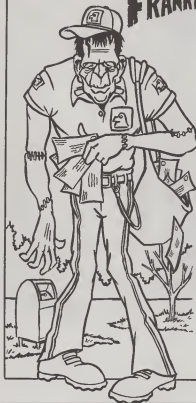
work of Sir Humphrey Davy, a celebrated chemist, and Erasmus Darwin, the grandfather of Charles Darwin. But both these men were as much poets as scientists, giving as much credence to philosophical speculation as to the hard cold facts of a rigorous scientific method. The simple fact of the matter is that the rational face of science is missing from FRANKENSTEIN. Consequently, it is a book that is better described as gothic fantasy.

Percy Shelley drowned while on a sailing trip in the Mediterranean four years after the first publication of his wife's masterpiece. Mary never remarried, outliving her husband by nearly thirty years. Although she went on to write four other novels, poetry, and a considerable number of short stories and travel sketches, Mary Shelley will be forever linked to Victor Frankenstein and the monster he created.



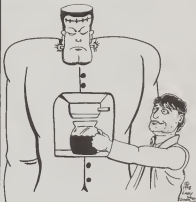
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CASTLE of FrankenTOONS MONSTER MASH



DR. FRANKENSTEIN DECIDES TO
INSTALL A FEW OPTIONS IN HIS CREATION.

We're still waiting for your **LETTERS of FRANKENSTEIN** to arrive regarding CoF #28. We need and want your letters and comments on this issue as well as #28. **SEND THEM IN TODAY! Thanks!**

We did however, receive the following brief post card message that should be of interest to readers of CoF.

Dennis-

Thanks for the "CoF," I finally know what "7 Footprints to Satan" is all about!

I'm getting my own website up. Address will be www.DONALDFGLUT.com. Photos, filmclips, music etc Don



CASTLE of **FRANKENSTEIN**

MONSTER MASH



180R DECIDES TO PLAY A PRANK ON DR. FRANKENSTEIN
BY GRABBING THE MOST CORRUPT BRAIN AVAILABLE

Dearbook 2000

THE GREAT HORROR STARS & CHARLIE CHAN

by Charles P. Mitchell

While working on my recent book on Charlie Chan, I was struck by how many of the great stars of horror cinema were featured in the series. The Chan films rank with Tarzan and the Bowery Boys as the most successful of all the great series. The very first Chan film dates back to 1926, one year after the first Chan novel was written by Earl Derr Biggers. The final film was made in 1981. To many fans, the two "key" set of Chan films were the 16 films Warner Oland made with 20th Century Fox, and the 22 films Sidney Toler made, half for Fox and half for Monogram Studios. There was also a Chan serial, two television series, and a handful of foreign pictures made in China, Cuba and Mexico.

It was the mainstream pictures that many horror stars made their appearances. This relationship began with the very first Chan sound film, *Behind That Curtain*, in 1929. Boris Karloff made his sound film debut in the very same picture. This film was made before Warner Oland joined the series, and Chan was played by a Korean actor named E.L. Park. His portrayal was not very good, and his screen time was reduced to only a few short scenes. Karloff played a Sudanese servant of Warner Baxter, the star of the film. The acting style in this film is very old-



Boris Karloff and Warner Oland during their key scene in *CHARLIE CHAN AT THE OPERA*.

fashioned and stilted, and Karloff makes a good impression in his small role, perhaps the only member of the cast who seems both natural and genuine in his role. Karloff returned to the Chan series in 1936 in *Charlie Chan at the Opera...* The film is one of the most popular of the Chan series, and provides Karloff with a meaty role as the demented opera singer named Gravelle. Karloff was accorded co-lead status with Warner Oland as Charlie Chan. Publicity for the film stressed the tagline "Warner Oland vs. Boris Karloff" in the posters, although in

the film Chan actually helps Gravelle. Karloff's role is somewhat reminiscent of his character in *The Walking Dead*, made the same year for Columbia. In both pictures Karloff is an amnesiac who is cast as a figure of menace although not genuinely a villain. The story begins with Karloff in the recreation room of the insane asylum, playing the piano and singing a dramatic opera aria. Karloff's powerful baritone singing voice was dubbed by Tudor Williams. Fox commissioned Oscar Levant, the colorful pianist and sometimes actor, to compose an opera featuring the devil that would become part of the plot. This opera was called *CARNIVAL*, and the story was based on *FAUST* just like the famous opera by Charles Gounod. When Gravelle sees a newspaper that *CARNIVAL* will be staged in San Francisco, he escapes from the asylum after overpowering his guard. Charlie Chan is asked to help in the case. Karloff takes refuge at the San Francisco Opera House, reminding one of the storyline of *The Phantom of the Opera*. His character substitutes for the regular baritone and he sings onstage. The singer he impersonates is found stabbed to death, and Karloff is blamed. Chan discovers the past history of Gravelle, and gains his confidence in a dramatic encounter in a



locked dressing room. Chan restages the murder, and asks Gravelle to again assume the role of Mephistopheles, the devil, onstage. Karloff is accidentally shot by a policeman, but Chan exposes the real murderer. The mad opera singer regains his memory, and as the picture ends, it seems clear he will totally recover his senses and become reunited with his daughter, who assumed her father had been killed many years earlier. Karloff and Oland played very well in their scenes together, one of the highlights of both their careers.

Bela Lugosi also made a dramatic impact as one of the greatest guest stars in the series in *The Black Camel* (1931). This film was the only Chan film actually shot in Hawaii, and it was his first screen appearance after his triumph in *Dracula* (1931). Not only Lugosi, but Renfield, Dwight Frye, also had a major role in *The Black Camel*. The film is based on the Earl Derr Biggers novel of the same name. Lugosi plays Tarneverro, a mystic and fortune teller who actually is trying to track down the murderer of his brother. The woman he suspects of the crime is herself murdered, and he joins forces with Chan to unravel the mystery. The plot has them co-operating at times and working at cross purposes on other occasions. A second killing occurs, and Chan suspects that Tarneverro himself may be the murderer. At the conclusion, Chan unmasks two different criminals behind the crime. Bela shows subtle alarm at Chan's hazardous driving. Lugosi nervously asks, "Have you been driving long?" Chan replies, "No. At first I am pretty bad driver, but now me and road turn corner same time." The comic interplay in this scene is a bonus in a very fine and entertaining film.

Peter Lorre later turned up almost by accident in the Chan series. In 1938, the film *Charlie Chan at the Ringside* was in production. Oland was unwell, and during the first few days of the film the director "shot around" him. It was soon clear that Oland couldn't continue, and in fact he was hospitalized shortly after. Since considerable footage was in the can, production was suspended. A quick rewrite was undertaken on the script, and the character of Mr. Moto was introduced to pinch hit for Chan. Moto was a Japanese secret agent played by Lorre in another series. This became the only film

where Moto acted like a detective instead of an intelligence officer. The title was changed to *Mr. Moto's Gamble*, but it was still also a Chan picture because Lorre's co-star remained Keye Luke in the role of Chan's Number One Son, Lee. The picture was an entertaining hybrid that combined elements and characters from both series. Moto makes a number of Chan-like statements during the film, and most of the plot is pure Chan formula. By the way, most film books say that this changeover from a Chan picture to a Moto picture was done after Oland's death, a complete error. This film was released in March, 1938, and Oland passed away on August 6, 1938 while visiting Sweden. He had recovered from his illness that sidelined him for *Charlie Chan at the Ringside*, and in fact he signed a contract with Fox for three additional Chan films. Oland's death was tragic, since he was only 58 at the time of his death. He had developed pneumonia, and medication which would have helped him overcome the disease existed but was not yet available. After Oland died,



(Top) Original poster art for the Lugosi - Oland collaboration made right after *DRACULA* (1930).

(Bottom) Dwight Frye and Bela Lugosi observe Charlie Chan at work in *THE BLACK CAMEL*.



there was a tribute to him included in the film *Mr. Moto's Last Warning* made in August 1938. In one scene, the camera stops momentarily on a theater marquee where the poster of a Charlie Chan is seen. Right under Warner Oland's name, there is a small banner that reads, "Last day."

Incidentally, another horror great was in *Charlie Chan at the Ringside/Mr. Moto's Gamble*. It was Lon Chaney Jr. in the role of Joey, a small time gangster. Lon had earlier appeared as a reporter in *Charlie Chan on Broadway* (1937), and he also played a henchman named Pierre who works for Leo G. Carroll (A Parisian locksmith and forger named Louis Santelle) in *Charlie Chan in City in Darkness* (1939). Actually, three "Count Draculas" appeared in Chan films...Bela Lugosi, Lon Chaney and Leslie Nielsen. Nielsen played the count in *Dracula: Dead and Loving It* (1995). Nielsen was one of the stars of *The Return of Charlie Chan* (1970), a telefeature where Ross Martin played the great detective. Oddly enough, the accent Nielsen used in that film as Greek shipping magnate Alex Hadrachi and the accent he used as Count Dracula were identical.

The suave and sinister George Zucco, well remembered from Universal's series of Mummy movies, played a mad scientist in Sidney Toler's first Chan effort called *Charlie Chan in Honolulu* (1938). As the eccentric Dr. Dardigan, Zucco is brilliant, one of the finest "red herrings" in the Chan series. His character seems like a refugee from a PRC horror picture. This film is set on a boat just offshore from Honolulu. Chan is called in to investigate the crime. At first, Zucco's character pretends to be deaf. Chan exposes this deceit by tossing a quarter on deck just as Dr. Cardigan passes. When the scientist turns around and scoops up the coin, Chan utters one of his best known aphorisms, "When money talk, few are deaf." Dr. Cardigan then shows Chan his prized possession, the brain of the Chinese criminal Chang Ho Ping, which he has kept alive for six months. He also mentions to Chan how he would love to have Chan's brain as a specimen. Another Zucco film, *The Flying Serpent* (1946), was the inspiration for one of the Monogram Chan pictures, *The Feathered Serpent* (1948). In another picture, *Dr. Renault's Secret* (1946)

Zucco turned an ape into a human. The actor who played his creation, J. Carrol Naish, had strong connections to the Chan series. He played the trainer of an ape in *Charlie Chan at the Circus* (1936). In the Fifties, Naish played Charlie Chan himself in the TV series *The New Adventures of Charlie Chan*. Thirty nine episodes were filmed for the half hour show that included James Hong as Chan's son Barry.

Lionel Atwill, star of many horror classics such as *Mystery of the Wax Museum* (1933), *Man-Made Monster* (1941) and countless others, was a key suspect in two Chan adventures with Sidney Toler, *Charlie Chan in Panama* and *Charlie Chan's Murder Cruise*, both from 1940. In the first, he plays Cliveden Compton, a British novelist who really is a secret agent working for the Allies. He is murdered midway through the film, and Chan avenges him by exposing his killer. In the second film he plays Dr. Suderman,



Bela Lugosi as the mysterious fortune teller in *THE BLACK CAMEL*.



Keyes Luke as Lee Chan and Peter Torre as Mr. Moto in the Chan/Moto film *MR. MOTO'S GAMBLE*.

the organizer of a round-the-world tour who finds his clients being murdered one by one as the tour continues. At the climax of the film, he pretends to be the killer in a scheme devised by Chan to trap the real murderer.

Henry Daniell was a talented character actor who appeared in numerous horror films such as *The Body Snatcher* (1945) and *The Four Skulls of Jonathan Drake* (1959) lent his talents to *Castle in the*



CHARLIE CHAN *in* LONDON



with
**Warner
OLAND**

**DRUE
LEYTON**

**RAYMOND
MILLAND**

**MONA
BARRIE**

Desert (1942), the last film in the Fox series of Chan films. The setting for this bizarre film is a medieval castle which was transported and rebuilt in the Mojave Desert. Daniell has a memorable role as eccentric sculptor Watson King. Of course, this is only a sinister deception, because Daniell is actually the insane half brother of the heroine who summoned Chan to visit her at the remote castle. Chan's thwarting of Daniell's devilish scheme brought the Fox series to a magnificent close.

Other lesser known actors associated with horror also appeared in numerous Chan films. Edmund Carewe, the Persian from the original *Phantom of the Opera* (1925), played a shifty mentalist in *Charlie Chan's Secret* (1936), and Ray Milland, who starred in the Roger Corman thrillers *The Premature Burial* (1962) and *X-The Man With the X-Ray Eyes* (1963), was the hero falsely accused

of murder in *Charlie Chan in London* (1934).

To fully explore all the fascinating details of the entire Chan series, be sure to track down A GUIDE TO CHARLIE CHAN FILMS (Greenwood, \$65). Noted filmmaker Richard Gordon, who served as Bela Lugosi's agent and produced such films as Karloff's *The Haunted Strangler* (1958) has called the book, "Terrific A 'must' for every Charlie Chan devotee around the world." You can order the book direct from the publisher at 1-800-225-5800 or request your local library to purchase a copy.

Ray Milland (at 10 o'clock) landed his first major role in this Chan picture.



J. Carol Naish played Charlie Chan in the television series shot in England (1957-58).

CASTLE of **FRANKENSTEIN**



Dearbook 2000

The SOUND of HORROR

by Alan Warren

Radio casts a spell unlike any other medium. For those old enough to remember the "good old days", TV just can't compete with shows like *Sherlock Holmes*, starring Basil Rathbone. Or radio adaptations of classic movies, like *To Have and Have Not*, starring Humphrey Bogart. Or adventures in an old west that never was, with Tom Mix or The Lone Ranger.

But what of the darker side of radio, the audio equivalent of Universal and Hammer films? Radio horror could be exceedingly chilling because it didn't have to show what it was depicting: your imagination conjured up images far more frightening than anything the camera lens could record. Case in point: "Three Skeleton Key", an episode of *Escape* with Vincent Price. Three men are stranded in a lonely lighthouse with no boat, no means of escape. The lighthouse is being slowly and inexorably invaded by thousands - no, millions of ravenous, clawing, flesh-eating, red-eyed rats. No matter how graphically it could be depicted onscreen, the mind conjures up images far more outre. Small wonder that radio is oft referred to as "theater of the mind". Since the horrors were unseen, writers could create more graphic gore than was possible on the big screen due to censorship. Thus, radio engineers devised ingenious "soundalike" effects: frying bacon was used to simulate an electrocution; a bludgeon striking a small melon simulated the sound of a human head being bashed; a chicken bone snapping was the sound of human bones breaking.

The format of most radio horror shows was simple enough: a host, whether it be the Hermit, the Man in Black, Raymond, The Whistler, or the Mysterious Traveler, greeted you with a few ghoulish puns, did the introduction and epilog, and then disappeared. This format worked so well that it carried over to comic books, then television.

This format was pioneered by *Inner Sanctum*, famous for its opening: the squeaking door. It was hosted by Raymond, actually Raymond Edward Johnson (he left in 1945, after which Paul McGrath hosted); he welcomed you in, introduced the story, and then discreetly disappeared only to return at story's end, uttering some more ghoulish puns, and allowed you to "decompose yourself".

Unlike some horror shows, *Inner Sanctum* played it safe: no matter how convincingly supernatural the story, the show rationalized the horror. Thus, if someone displayed vampiric tendencies throughout the episode, you were assured of a last minute revelation that they were merely posing as a vampire. This led to a heavy reliance on astounding coincidences and sometimes completely illogical sequence of events.

The man behind *Inner Sanctum* was Himan Brown, later the producer of the *CBS Radio Mystery Theatre*, which revived the squeaking door. His arsenal of terror included "doom chords" played on a Hammond organ to increase the terror, "stings" to emphasize dialog, and "bridges" to link scenes together. There were many effective *Inner Sanctum*s, including "Devil's Workshop", "Skeleton Bay", "The Devil's Fortune", "Death on the Highway", and an adaptation of "The Tell-Tale Heart" starring Boris Karloff. One of the most effective was a bizarre episode entitled "Death and Taxis", in which a young woman steps into the back seat of a cab... only to find a dead body there. It's sort of outre premise that



Vintage artwork by Harry Clarke from *Poe's Tales of Mystery & Imagination* courtesy of Michael L. Mathews.

probably couldn't be sustained in a full length feature or even a TV episode but worked perfectly on radio.

Inner Sanctum ran from 1941 to 1952. It was revived on television, to much lesser effect. Not surprisingly, it spawned many imitators, among them *The Haunting Hour*, *The Black Castle*, *The Sealed Book*, *Quiet Please*, and *The Weird Circle*.

Less inclined to rationalize its terrors was the semi-satirical *The Hermit's Cave*, with its memorable opening spiel delivered by a cackling host: "Ghost stories... weird stories... and murders too! The Hermit knows of them all! Heh heh heh! Turn out your lights!" The Hermit frequently presented tales of supernatural horror that were just that, with no attempt to rationalize or "explain" the supernatural goings-on. The series ran from 1940 to 1943, and included such genuinely frightening episodes as "House of Murder", "House on Lost Land's Bluff", "Mystery of the Strange Thing", "The Vampire's Desire", and "Burned Alive".



And then there was *The Mysterious Traveler*. We boarded midnight trains with him and listened to his bizarre tales of murder, ghosts and mayhem until the inevitable climax ("Oh, you have to get off here? I'm sorry! I'm sure we'll meet again. I take this same train every week at the same time."). *The Mysterious Traveler* ran from 1943 to 1952 and spawned a short-lived comic book version. It was created by radio writer Robert Arthur, who "ghost-edited" the wonderful Alfred Hitchcock anthologies, such as *Stories for Late at Night* and *Stories They Wouldn't Let Me Do on TV*. The Traveler himself was played by Maurice Tarplin, who did double duty as *The Strange Dr. Weird*. A 15-minute series that also delivered its share of thrills, albeit in a briefer version.

Just as there are lost horror and sf films, there are lost radio programs. Perhaps the most sorely missed is Robert Bloch's legendary *Stay Tuned for Terror*. Bloch's seminal story "Yours Truly, Jack the Ripper" had been dramatized most effectively with Laird Cregar on Kate Smith's radio show; as a result Bloch was given the chance to adapt his own stories. The result was a virtual cornucopia of horror featuring the typically Blochian combination of sardonic skepticism and death's-head humor, usually epitomized by a pun or turn of phrase, the formula that made Bloch's short stories distinctive. Among the stories presented on the program (and, alas, never heard again) were "The Bat is My Brother", "The Beasts of Barsac", "Horror Show", "Return of the Monster", "The Grinning Ghoul", and "The Man who Lost His Head."

But the absolute scariest, no holds barred, radio horror show of them all was probably *Lights Out*. It is forever identified with this greeting: "LIGHTS OUT ... Everybody." And its memorable closer: "It ... Is ... Later ... Than ... You ... Think." Although *Lights Out* is usually associated with Arch Oboler, it was actually created by Wyllis Cooper. It was first heard as a 15-minute feature on Chicago's WENR in January 1934, then moved to NBC the following year. When Cooper left for Hollywood to write movie scripts (including *Son of Frankenstein*), NBC handed the series to Oboler, who ran it for two years. His first story, "Burial Services", featured a paralyzed girl being

buried alive! After the broadcast NBC was flooded with over 50,000 letters. In the late 1940s Wyllis Cooper would create another surrealistic horror radio series called *Quiet Please*.

Lights Out featured many notable guest stars, including Boris Karloff, who appeared in four consecutive shows in 1938: "Cat Wife", "Valse Triste", "Three Matches", and "The Dream". On October 6, 1942, Oboler revived *Lights Out* as a 30-minute show originating from New York (it later moved to Hollywood), sponsored by Fleischmann's Ionized Yeast. The first episode was "What the Devil", a story with a distinct similarity to Richard Matheson's later *Duel*; Oboler later sued Playboy and ABC for copyright infringement. Other memorable episodes included "Organ", about a couple who move into a (what else?) haunted house and hear a mysterious organ that plays every night at midnight. "Murder Castle", a frightening true story, was a dramatization of the murderous career of H.H. Holmes, whose

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exploits inspired Bloch's novel *American Gothic*. And, of course, "Chicken Heart", which was a real episode about a chicken

CASTLE of FRANKENSTEIN



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heart that grew and grew until it covered the earth, made famous by Bill Cosby when he spoofed it on a record.

Lights Out ran until September 28, 1943, with its memorable final episode, "The Author and the Thing", in which Arch Oboler played himself, busily writing the last episode of the program when he has an unwelcome guest...

Like *Inner Sanctum*, *Lights Out* made the transition to television; it ran from 1949 to 1952, but like *Inner Sanctum* it never had the same impact.

One of the great radio programs of all time, and probably the most successful in terms of sheer thrills, was *Suspense* (radio's outstanding theatre of thrills). It ran for more than 20 years and featured some of the biggest stars of the era, including some not noted for dramatic roles - for them *Suspense* was a welcome change of pace in which to flex their dramatic muscles. These actors included Orson Welles, Cary Grant, Lucille Ball, Bob Hope, Joan Crawford, Danny Kaye, Van Johnson, Judy Garland, Mickey Rooney, and even Jack Benny. The program began as an episode of *Forecast* (which was just what the title implied, a proving ground for pilot episodes of possible series) directed by none other than Alfred Hitchcock. Apparently Hitchcock wanted to create a radio drama featuring a suspenseful situation each week. The first official episode of *Suspense* was aired on June 17, 1942.

Suspense featured many memorable episodes, among them "The Waxwork" (with William Conrad doing all the voices), "Ghost Hunt", based on an H.R. Wakefield story, "The Hands of Mr. Ottermole", "The Doctor Prescribed Death" with Bela Lugosi, "August Heat", Lovecraft's "The Dunwich Horror", John Dickson Carr's "Fire Burn and Cauldron Bubble" with George Zucco, and a two-part adaptation of "Donovan's Brain" with John McIntire.

One of the greatest *Suspense* episodes, and a classic of radio drama, was "On a Country Road", with Cary Grant and Jeanette Nolan. Grant, jovial as always, is taking his wife on a trip by car when he decides to take a shortcut over some lonely country roads. A thunderstorm kicks up just as they flick on the radio, only to hear that a dangerously insane woman has escaped from a local asylum and is believed to be in the area. At just

that point they run out of gas.

Another classic episode is the legendary "House in Cypress Canyon." Robert Taylor plays a man desperate to get a home during the post-war housing shortage. He and his wife manage to find a suitable dwelling in Cypress Canyon. All goes well until they settle down for the night, only to hear an ear-splitting howl, as of some gigantic cat. Later, they find a trail of blood, leading up to a locked door...

Escape, too, offered its share of thrills. Lulled by William Conrad's deceptively enticing introduction ("Tired of your everyday routine? Ever dream of a life of romantic adventure? Want to get away from it all? We offer you... *Escape!*"), we traveled to far-off, exotic ports of call. Richard Connell's classic "The Most Dangerous Game" was dramatized, along with "Leiningen vs. The Ants", John Collier's "Evening Primrose", and, perhaps most memorable of all, the previously cited "Three Skeleton Key."

Science fiction also fared well on radio. With only sound effects to simulate the world of the 21st century and beyond, there was no danger of visual fakiness, no shaky rear-projection or inadequate special effects to spoil the illusion while listening to such stories as Heinlein's "The Roads Must Roll", done on *Dimension X*. (Or, as the narrator intoned, *Dimension X ... X ... X ... X ...*) This pioneering sf series also featured adaptations of Jack Vance's "The Pottery of Firsk", and several Ray Bradbury classics, including "Marionettes, Inc.", "And the Moon Be Still as Bright", and the terrifying "Mars is Heaven!" done in a way no motion picture could have equaled, let alone bettered. (*X Minus One* was the follow-up to *Dimension X*.)

Not all radio shows depended on a host; some featured continuing characters just as effectively. Of these *The Shadow* may well be the single best-remembered radio hero of them all. No CoF reader needs to be told the details of his origin, or to be reminded of his alter ego, Lamont Cranston, "wealthy young man about town", or his "friend and companion", the lovely Margo Lane. The Shadow was originally a mere narrator named James



LaCurto, who read stories from *Detective Stories* over the air with a sepulchral intonation. A writer with a history of mental problems named Harry Charlton (whose mysterious death by poisoning some years later was never solved) suggested the narrator be named "The Shadow." Soon listeners began asking for "that Shadow magazine" at newsstands. Thus, a legend was born.

There was quite a difference between Street & Smith's *Shadow* and the one heard over the airwaves. The pulp *Shadow* administered justice with a pair of blazing 45s while the less bloodthirsty radio *Shadow* relied on invisibility. Long ago, in the Orient, he had learned how to "cloud men's minds", the perfect weapon for an unseen radio hero. The most famous radio *Shadow* was Orson Welles; he played the role for two years before leaving for Hollywood. Taking his place were Bill Johnstone and Bret Morrison. Many of the *Shadow*'s adventures took place in haunted mansions, eerie museums, cavernous tombs, and various other dens of horror. These episodes include such evocative titles as "Ghost



Town", "The Creeper", "The House of Horror", "Death Prowls at Night", "The Organ Played at Midnight", "The Chess Club Murders", "The Gabbaring Thing", and "The Case of the Phantom Werewolf", many of them written by sf master Alfred Bester, author of *The Demolished Man* and *The Stars My Destination*.

The Shadow held on until 1954. His undelible trademarks included two immortal lines: "The weed of crime bears bitter fruit", and "Crime does not pay. The Shadow knows", followed by a maniacal laugh.

Then there was *The Whistler*. He was played by Bill Forman, and his distinctive 13-note whistle was dubbed by Dorothy Roberts. The stories unfolded by The Whistler were often murder plots cooked up by two-timing husbands and wives, with a sting in the tail. They were usually suspenseful rather than supernatural, but The Whistler himself remained a mysterious presence. As Bhob Stewart noted in *Castle of Frankenstein* #6: "Beneath the bedcovers in a darkened room, we could put the receiver next to our pillows, huddle close to its warmth -- our faces glowing from the little kilocycle dial -- and suddenly, we were walking the quiet dark streets outside with a familiar figure -- The Whistler. Even though he was a friend, we did feel slightly uneasy when we heard his footsteps, the strange tune he whistled... And the omniscient words he greeted us with each week on those darkened streetcorners: 'I am The Whistler and I know many things for I walk by night. I know many secrets hidden in the hearts of men and women who have stepped into the shadows. I know the nameless terrors of which they dare not speak.'" There were many memorable episodes, including "The Bridge of Black Mountain", "Dark Moon", "Quiet Sunday", "Murder at Twin Pines", "The Black Book", "One Dark Night", "The Man who Died Twice", and "The House on Sycamore Road". The Whistler came to radio in 1942 and lasted until 1956. Like *Inner Sanctum* and *Lights Out* he too crossed over to television, with unmemorable results, though there was a very successful, critically-acclaimed series of Whistler films from Columbia (1944-1948), all starring Richard Dix, the most effective entries helmed by a young director on

leave from Orson Welles' Mercury Theatre. His name: William Castle.

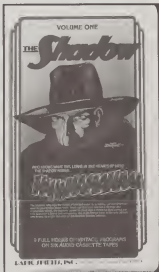
Finally, the strains of Sibelius' *Valse Triste* bring back fond memories of one of the greatest radio shows of them all -- *I Love a Mystery*. The staff of the A-1 Detective Agency included Jack Packard (Michael Raffeto), Doc Long (Barton Yarborough), and Reggie York (Walter Patterson) -- better known as Jack, Doc, and Reggie. Unlike other radio shows, ILAM was a continuing saga in several episodes -- the longest was 22 15-minute installments. The series was created by Carlton E. Morse, a radio pioneer who also helmed the classic soap opera *One Man's Family*.

Jack, Doc, and Reggie were involved in many a bizarre adventure, including "Bury Your Dead, Arizona", in which the three were pitted against an enormously fat magician named the Maestro. "The Thing That Cries in the Night" found them staying in an old mansion to protect three sisters marked for murder -- and named Faith, Hope, and Charity. Other episodes included "The Decapitation of Jefferson Monk", "My Beloved is a Vampire", "The Graves of Wamperjaw, Texas" and "The Corpse in Compartment C-Car 27". The most famous, so popular it was retold several times with slight variations, was "The Temple of the Vampires".

I Love a Mystery ran from 1939 to 1952. It spawned three films released by Columbia in the 40s: *I Love a Mystery*, *The Devil's Mask*, and *The Unknown*, all featuring the original radio cast. One interesting sidelight: when the cast for the New York version of the radio show was assembled Reggie was played by a young actor from Oklahoma -- Tony Randall.

Radio horror is a thing of the past now. It reached its peak sometime in the 1940s, and after that the inevitable decline set in. There have been sporadic efforts to bring

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it back -- the CBS *Mystery Theatre* hosted by E.G. Marshall, was undoubtedly the most successful -- but it seems destined to remain where it belongs: in our memories and on programs like the current *Radio Was*, hosted by radio's own Stan Freberg. (Hundreds of individual radio programs are available through Radio Spirits, which sponsors the program.)

Perhaps radio wasn't really as good as people remember, perhaps we dwell on the outstanding episodes and ignore the ones that were merely adequate. Perhaps. But for those bitten by the radio bug early in life there is one consolation: the affliction has proved happily incurable.



THE PHANTOM EMPIRE

CHAPTER TWO:

THE THUNDER RIDERS

by Jeff "THE CLIFF-HANGER" Kurta

Cowboy Gene Autry, Frankie and Betsy (brother and sister, and children of the other owner of RADIO RANCH) and THE JUNIOR THUNDER RIDERS prevail! Falling to what appears to be their instant death, our three heroes manage to roll down the side of the awesome cliff, grabbing onto a handy solid tree limb, which protrudes from the rocky side! They are miraculously saved! And immediately on the scene appears the faithful kids, members of THE JUNIOR THUNDER RIDERS CLUB! With yet another lasso, they reel in our terrific trio.

And they have been rescued just in the nick of time too. It is almost 2 o'clock, and Gene must be ready to broadcast another show from RADIO RANCH! It is all or nothing now!!! Professor Beetson is infuriated, as he watches from the confines of his comfy little room, and spies Gene Autry still alive and breathing! Our man in the white hat has made it back to the ranch in time. And in front of a "live" mike, begins to once again entertain his radio audience. It is time for some toe-tapping folks! While there is laughter on the surface, Queen Tika is furious with her head of the "hunt party", for not having dealt with Autry. The commander will be offered ten mean lashes, from the mighty whip of Tika's main punson Argo (Wheeler Oakman)!!!

In a dandy display for the excited on-lookers, Autry and company, put on a real shoot 'em up show. Gene dons a fake mustache, and suddenly becomes a rifle-tooting outlaw. Gene and his band of "badmen" fire on a helpless stagecoach passenger (the other owner of RADIO RANCH in real life), and then ride away like the wind. As part of the performance, THE JUNIOR THUNDER RIDERS ride ("To the rescue!"), onto the scene, but find that the elder gene is really dead! The fellow was the father to young Frankie and Betsy. Autry cannot figure it out, as no real lead was even fired. Ah, but close inspection, reveals that Autry's still hot Winchester rifle, contains actual bullets! It has to be a frame-up, as Professor Beetson stands in plain view now,

beaming devilishly! The kids do not believe that their friend is the gutty party, but nevertheless, the sheriff will be coming for him! Out through a window Gene Autry leaps, and heads for his already saddled "Champion" The man must try and clear his name!

In the meantime, a posse is formed, and Professor Beetson offers his aircraft to the determined sheriff. In the baggage-compartment of the plane, hides Frankie, and his sister, the pixie-like tomboyish Betsy! The lawman is very prepared too, for he is carrying a dangerous supply of gas bombs! Autry is soon sighted, but also by Queen Tika's Muranian men, who have orders to capture him. The sheriff tosses one bomb

after another, directing the launchings at the underground army, but they have no effect on them...the Muranians are wearing masks, that the gas cannot penetrate! The two helpless kids are hanging on now, for dear life!!!! Queen Tika spies the plane through her scientific "windows", and orders a mountain missile to be fired at once. In mere moments, the aircraft is me head-on by a most powerful instrument of destruction! The plane's pilot, the sheriff, and Frankie and Betsy, are right in the middle of an immense explosion! Surely no human being could survive this! (???) Don't you dare touch that dial, or "page"!!!!

CHAPTER THREE:

THE LIGHTNING CHAMBER

As the battered airplane heads for earth, Frankie and his sister quickly don parachute-packs, and leap to freedom (although Betsy manages to get snagged by an unwelcome tree!). Gene is quickly on-the-scene, after a very narrow escape



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THE PHANTOM EMPIRE



with the marauding Muranian battalion, and even though is in serious danger of getting himself arrested (for a murder he did not commit!), he rushes to the aid of the sheriff, and the still very much alive pilot. They had made a safe landing just in time! In a bit of brilliant scheming, on the part of Gene Autry, he switches clothes with the plane pilot, just before the mounted RADIO RANCH posse shows up. In-cluded in this group of hunters is Gene's pals Oscar (Smiley Burnette, a real comball!), and the very wimpy Pete (William Moore). The pair are bumbling fools! The posse thinks that they are taking the sheriff and the pilot back to the ranch. Well, that is only "partly" right...The real pilot was hidden by our hero, and it is Gene Autry, incognito, who is being carefully escorted! He is quite determined to clear his name!

Back inside the city of Murania, Queen Tika has ordered the death of the "Captain of the Guard", who for the second time, has failed to capture Gene Autry. His death will be a swift one, and monitored by the High Chancellor of Murania, the already mentioned Argo. The young



soldier will meet his maker, after entering THE LIGHTNING CHAMBER! Once there, Argo explains that he will spare his life, and only because he is totally against the wicked woman, and her wicked ways. He has saved 37 other such men, before this! Argo plans to lead a Muranian rebellion, and overthrow the female ruler. He is gaining quite an army of his own design! The young military man is speechless! The Queen may be beautiful, but she is certainly no angel.

BACK AT THE RANCH - With another brilliant idea, Frankie and Betsy lure Professor Beetson and his entourage, away from their room. The idea this time? To try and find the rifle that murdered the kids' dad, and to set things right once more. Betsy discovers the murder weapon underneath a mattress, and it is taken to the sheriff, who will soon be leaving the ranch. Beetson and his gang discover that the rifle is missing, and blame it all on Autry. Our hero has been "playing sick" in the meanwhile, lying in bed, with a handkerchief covering his features...that is until the bad guys find out! Gene jumps into the sheriff's auto, and speeds off, with another car in very hot pursuit! Only one problem however (a REALLY BIG ONE!)...Gene's car has no brakes!!! After traveling at an unknown break-neck speed, around winding country roads, Gene loses control of the machine, and goes end-over-end, down a high embankment! Surely Gene Autry cannot possess nine lives!((???)) FOLLOW ALONG...I COMMAND YOU!!!

CHAPTER FOUR:

PHANTOM BROADCAST

THE JUNIOR THUNDER RIDERS have saved the day yet again! Before the sheriff's car went out of control, Frankie got near enough for Autry to make a giant leap for his thundering horse! The car traveled a long way down, when it finally rested...and exploded. Another too-close call for Gene Autry! The sheriff, with his men around him, pull up to the scene, with the second auto. Looking down at the smoking wreckage, they feel satisfied now that Autry is dead. But far from it he is!

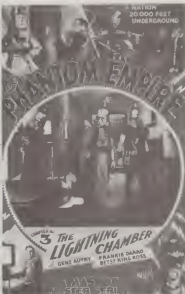
Time is growing short once more, and 2 o'clock is again fastly approaching. Gene must find a way to broadcast at the ranch, or lose everything. But how can this be

done? If he is caught in the open, he will be arrested for sure, and taken into custody. Suddenly, another brain-storm...Autry will be able to execute a "secret broadcast", via remote-control, and Frankie's help. The boy is quite the genius with radio equipment it seems. And while at the secret headquarters of THE JUNIOR THUNDER RIDERS' club house, the young wiz-kid's electrical menagerie is put to the test. Just then, huge waves of electrical interference enter the picture, playing havoc with all the equipment. And Frankie's direction finder is pointing straight down...indicating a disturbance, emanating from the center of the earth!!! There must be life down there...somewhere! And time waits for no one.

Gene's life must be put back in order, but how to do it (?), since the murder weapon was obliterated in the car wreck! Choice evidence no longer exists. Professor Beetson cannot wait for RADIO RANCH to "go down the trail", so that he can finally smother himself with radium! And speaking of radium

- Queen Tika, is preparing to have a radium-laden launching. She orders a deadly rocket to fire on RADIO RANCH...a missile that will finally put an end to it all!!! Gene manages to sneak by Oscar and Pete, and makes his way to the clubhouse, where he soon finds himself back on the air (and much to the total dismay of Beetson!). After a quick song, it is off to hide, as Beetson and his loyal servant thugs come up with the secret remote-control wire...and follow it. After shutting a secret trap-door in the floor, Gene, Frankie, and Betsy, make their way through a very dark underground tunnel. Frankie however, not paying close enough attention to matters at hand, has a big hole in the sack

of gunpowder he is carrying along! And a nice trail of the stuff, has lagged behind them...all the way from the clubhouse! Beetson picks up a hot electrical wire,





found in the midst of young Frankie's lab-stuff. The greedy scientist drops the wire to the floor, where it immediately sends a spark to meet with gunpowder! The trail behind our three heroes, now becomes a long fuse, and they are at the end of it!!! WILL OUR HEROES BE BLOWN TO SMITHEREENS???(!!!) DON'T YOU DARE EVEN BREATHE!!"

CHAPTER FIVE:

BENEATH THE EARTH

As the "fuse" finds its home (Frankie's little sack of gunpowder!), a terrific explosion occurs! But our heroes are again saved from doom...by the gallant young JUNIOR THUNDER RIDERS!!! They have raced to the rescue, and pulled our trio from the opposite end of the

CASTLE of FRANKENSTEIN

secret tunnel, and before the exploding fragments could cause any bodily harm. IN THE NICK OF TIME!!" But the danger is not yet over. Professor Beetson and his goons have spotted them! Now what???(!!!) Gene and his two young pals (Frankie and Betsy), escape on horseback with the legion of heroic kids, with the nasty professor and his gang, immediately behind them. With some very clever maneuvering, our good folks manage to lose the vile villains!

In the meanwhile, Oscar and his helpful (?) partner Pete, have received instructions to smuggle the radio broadcasting equipment to a secret

clubhouse, located in Thunder Canyon, so off they trod in wagon, with the idiot Oscar masquerading as an old woman! Gene must keep broadcasting every single afternoon at 2, or lose his contract, and RADIO RANCH. If that is to occur, then Professor Beetson will grin from ear to ear. His real search for the radium deposits would be able to commence! The monster of a scientist wants everyone out of his way!

AND BACK TO MURANIA - Through the wonders of Murania "television", Queen Tika has spotted the secret hideaway...and again, Gene Autry! The blond-haired ruler, also wants it seems, for Autry to lose the ranch. With the area once deserted, Murania could then rest, and not fret about earthen threats any longer. Another round of Thunder



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Guards are dispatched from the underground city of metal, exiting through a secret mountain passage. They ride like the wind, and their helmets on tight (and affixed to each soldier's helmet, is a very special breathing apparatus. The Muranians cannot withstand the air of the surface!). Autry must be apprehended this time for sure!!

At that time, along comes Oscar and Pete, edging closer to the secret shack. But they quickly turn tail and scatter, as they see the band of armed Muranians, charging their way! Not far off too, is Beetson and his band of cutthroats. They are also scared off by the beings from under the earth! At the shack, one of the soldiers has burned his way through the main door, using a special kind of hand-torch. And within mere moments, fists fly, as Gene Autry meets up with the helmeted warrior. Our hero prevails, but the battle was not an easy one. The flaming torch was quite the hindrance! The two kids look on, as their pal, exchanges garb with the unconscious Muranian

Once outside, Autry (who now looks exactly like a Muranian military man!), is surrounded by soldiers from below. They, think him to be one of their own, and inform their fellow guardsman, that he must now face the serious consequences. He has let Autry get away, and for that terrible mistake, must pay the ultimate penalty! Our hero is in deep trouble at the moment, as he is taken to the scientific city, where he meets the queen, face-to-face! She is shocked to discover Gene Autry beneath the Muranian disguise, but is actually more relieved, than shocked. She finally has the singing earthman in her clutches!

Autry looks all about him, and cannot believe his eyes. He seems now to be living a nightmare, with walking metalmen all over the place! What kind of weird world is this???(!!!) Tika takes Autry on a brief tour, showing him things she considers to be far superior than the lowly humans who reside above. And then, she orders the radio star to be taken to the LIGHTNING CHAMBER -AKA- "THE DEATH CHAMBER"!!! Her main man Argo, has been instructed by her, to turn up the voltage to 200,000! Within seconds, Gene Autry is a prisoner inside a giant house of raving electrical currents!!! WILL OUR LOYAL HERO OF THE

PEOPLE OF THE EARTH BE TOASTED TO A CRISP???(!!!) WHERE IS FRANKIE and BETSY NOW?! SURELY NO MERE FLESH and BLOOD HUMAN CAN WITHSTAND THIS!!!(???) BE PREPARED...THERE'S A LOT MORE ALL-OUT ACTION TO COME!!!

CHAPTER SIX:

DISASTER FROM THE SKIES

Queen Tika watches intently, as Argo throws the master switch, to fry Gene Autry...but she does not see everything! Argo, has set our man free, and he is sent down a special chute, where he ends up in a secret chamber! Argo gives the nod to his queen, and utters "Autry's lips are sealed" Through a tiny window in the room, Gene hears the voices of men. They turn out to be the men that Argo had saved from death much earlier. They are now part of his rebellion, to overthrow Queen Tika! Argo has kept them away from danger, and in secret, until the time is ready to strike! The men have perfected an "atom smashing device" (which is not quite ready for demonstrating purposes yet!), which will eventually be utilized to obliterate the universe! Hand ray weapons have also been constructed. These will blind an enemy immediately upon contact! The hidden men discover that Autry is in the chamber beside them, and race to grab him. The quick witted hero, manages to pull away (after jabbing a few power-packed punches!), and points a ray rifle in their direction! Autry is grabbed once more, but manages to shrug it off...but in the process, the raygun has accidentally been triggered. One of the Muranian rebels is now totally blind!!! Our tough earthman escapes, and makes his way near the city's control room. There, he sees the queen peering through her miracle "wonder windows", keeping an eye on the Professor at the ranch. She learns (and Gene overhears), that RADIO RANCH will soon close down! But she learns too, that Beetson will be soon hot on the trail of Muranin! He must be stopped!!!

Gene, who still has the raygun, meets up with a control-room technician (after the



quick departure of the evil Queen Tika), and ends up knocking the fellow "into the next world"! He spots Frankie and Betsy through one of the Muranian "windows", and manages to hook up an audio cable, to speak to them. Gene informs the pair where he is, but soon has to hide...Queen Tika and Argo have entered!

The Monarch of Murania discovers that the kids will be trying to ride with their JUNIOR THUNDER RIDERS to the city. She will not hear of it!!! If she finds out that Gene Autry is actually still among the living, somebody is going to pay...VERY DEARLY! An aerial attack is set in motion, with a speeding missile on target. And the target is...THE JUNIOR THUNDER RIDERS!!! Gene makes it to the missile control-base, but must fight off a fierce guardsman (a man that refuses to stay down!) Gene pulls this lever and that, trying in vain to make the rocket of death veer off and away from his legion of young protectors. Just then the still animate soldier knocks him out with a mighty blow! And, now the missile is heading straight for them!!! In a quick eye-blink, the missile has made its very explosive mark! WILL GENE AUTRY BE SENT TO KINGDOM COME???(!!!) FIND OUT!!! BE SURE TO HANG AROUND FOR "CHILLING CHAPTER SEVEN"!!! THE PHANTOM EMPIRE HAS YET TO SHOCK YOU!!!

TO BE CONTINUED -



THE RETURN of THE MONSTER

Chapter 4

Story by John Skerchock

Art by Scott Pensak



Trooper Martin stood in the ball room of Neidig Mansion and marveled at all of the old style architecture. Much of it was warped and rotten, but a large section was under repair. Stained glass windows were being restored. Modern lighting made to look like Old World crystal chandeliers was being fitted in a recently patched ceiling.

Workers were busy carrying boxes into the room, mixing paints, patching holes, and doing a number of jobs like they were under an important deadline.

"Who would have thought this place was so beautiful?" said Chief Lang. The policeman had his hat in one hand and was scratching his forehead with the other. "When I was a kid I thought Count Dracula lived here."

"Too many windows, Chief," joked Trooper Martin.

"So what do you think this guy does?"

"Who? Oberman?"

"Yeah," said Lang as he walked towards a painting hanging on an inside wall. The painting was obviously old. The canvas was cracked in places, and the gold leaf frame had lost a piece or two over the years. The painting showed an old castle high in the Alps, its center tower reaching into the clouds.

"Now that's art," said the Chief. "Not this stuff you see made with twisted bits of metal and glass."

"So you don't know anything about this guy either?"

"No. Well, he doesn't live in town. This is out of my jurisdiction. You guys handle up here."

"With all the emphasis on running radar in recent years I'll bet you guys haven't seen a town in ages let alone had time to patrol the rural areas."

"Well, he is bringing a lot of business to

town. Contracted a lot of locals for work. Lots of visitors filling up the restaurant and Eddy's Diner in town."

"But nobody talks about what he does," said Chief Lang as he turned away from the painting at the sound of a door opening behind him.

Trooper Martin turned to see a large, hulking form of a man being led by the gaunt, pale servant that ushered them in. The man was huge. He could easily have been a professional wrestler, thought Martin, and perhaps he was judging from the scars on his face?

"Gentlemen," said the large man, "I am Adam Oberman." He extended a large hand first to the Chief.

"I'm Chief Lang. This is Trooper Martin," he said shaking Oberman's hand.

"Hello," said Trooper Martin as he shook Oberman's hand. Martin felt the strength in that grip. Oberman certainly was no slouch. He had to work out. Martin sensed power.

"A trooper? Do you work with Chief Lang?"

"In a way. Sometimes we have cases that cross jurisdictions."

"I don't understand." Trooper Martin



had detected the hint of an accent earlier but noticed it gains strength when their host became puzzled.

"I'm from town. Trooper Martin is from the state police."

"State police? Have I done something wrong?" Oberman seemed to take a step back. "If I have you must forgive me. I am new to your country and its ways. I have people who help me but they are not always quick to point out to me your laws."

"Oh, no, no," said Lang quick to notice Oberman's discomfort. Martin, on the other hand said nothing. He was curious about Oberman's sudden guilty reaction.

"We're looking for a pair of missing people who may have gone hiking in these mountains. We're just wondering if you may have seen them..."

"No! I see nobody."

Martin took a photograph out of his breast pocket and offered it to Oberman who did not acknowledge it.

"I see only guests that I invite and you. My property is private. If I see anyone else I call you."

"I understand, sir, we just thought that perhaps they may have stopped here for some assistance."

At this point the servant that was with Oberman tugged at his sleeve. Oberman stooped down and the servant whispered something into his ear. Oberman nodded and turned back to the policemen.

"My servant has informed me that the grounds are regularly patrolled and we have seen no one. Now if you will excuse me..."

"Mr. Oberman, what is it that you do here?" asked Martin.

"Me? I do nothing."

"But all this work..."

"I am renovating to live here, and to use part of this facility to continue with my research."

"What kind of research?" asked Chief Lang.

"It is medical."

"What branch?"

"Human anatomy. We are working on human anatomy. Now if you will excuse me I must get back."

"Sure, sir. Thank you."

"Thank you," said Martin. He watched as Oberman turned quickly away and disappeared behind the large door from which he had come.

"I shall show you out," said the gaunt servant in a whispered voice.

"So where is Mr. Oberman from?" asked Martin of the servant.

"The old country."

"Is he a doctor?"

"No, but he employs many."

Martin saw that the servant was willingly answering questions so he thought he would press his advantage.

"You haven't seen these people have you?" The servant glanced quickly at the picture and continued walking. "They look like all the other."

"What others?"

"We have many who visit us here. People come. People go. And here you



are. Please be careful leaving," said the servant as he opened the door for Martin.

"Where's Chief Lang?" Martin thought the Chief was right behind him but lost him as they walked through several halls to the exit.

The servant and Martin began to look around. "Lang!" called Martin.

"Coming," said the Chief from around the corner.

"Where'd you go?"

"While you two were talking I started looking around. Saw another servant going through some rooms in the back. He took me by surprise."

"Why?"

"Well, if he had a little more meat on his bones and some hair on his head I'd swear he was old Doc Masters, a local GP, who died a few years back. I used to go to him as a kid every time I was sick. He was a heck of a nice guy."

"That couldn't have been him?"

"Hell, no, he's been dead, ah, I'd say

about ten years now. He's buried in the cemetery just down from Gary's. Family plot, you know."

"Okay, let's get out of here."

They got in the Chief's car and headed down the long winding road into town. They passed Gary's and Martin saw that it looked deserted save for the bicycle out front.

"I see Steve's busy." Lang nodded in the direction of the tavern.

"Huh?"

"Steve Barna. You met him yesterday. Used to be into all kinds of weird stuff as a kid. He flipped out in college, now Gary takes care of him."

"Oh, yeah, weird kid." But Martin didn't have time to think about kids. Something was bothering him. "Jef, what do we know about Oberman?"

"Why? What's bugging you?"

"Did you ever see anyone act so guilty about nothing?"

"You're right. He did seem anxious, but it may have been the booze."

"I didn't get that close to him, but I did smell something."

"He reeked of it. Master of fact that whole place smelled like it."

"He did say they were doing medical research so."

"Yeah. Barney Roan gets boozed up and he never smelled as bad as that. Maybe it is medical."

"But what's he hiding?"

"Stranger in a strange land?"

"Don't go Heinlein on me, Chief."

"Face it. He's probably from a country that was under Communist rule for ages. He's no young man. He's probably just scared about anything having to do with the police."

"Then you'd think he'd be more cooperative."

"You think he had something to do with the disappearance of those hikers?"

"No," said Martin. "But I believe he has something to hide and what it is may be more important than those two hikers."

"Okay. So we'll look into him some more."

Jimmy Kravelt was tired. He was about ready to shove this job. No one ever treated him the way this Oberman did and just because he paid cash up front didn't give him the right to push him around. Jimmy may not be the best contractor in the business but he knew what he had to do to get by.

How dare that big oaf accuse him of using inferior products. Particle board is just as good as oak and a lot cheaper. Who is going to know the difference once you cover it with a few layers of paint?

And what's with those guys moving all those crates to the basement? How much are they getting paid? Why isn't any of his crew allowed to help and get in on the gravy? What's he hiding? And why were the cops here? Did he imagine things or did Oberman seem afraid of the cops?

Jimmy never had a job that paid as well as this and lasted as long as it had. That was not reason to be grateful. What was he going to do next month? What about next year?

Oberman wants this work done at a ridiculous pace. He won't tell Jimmy why. He won't share any secrets so Jimmy felt under no obligation to be a team player. Well, then, he's just going to have to pay more for it. Emily and the kids could wait dinner for him. He saw his workmen off and went back into the mansion. He was going to talk to Oberman and set him straight on some demands.

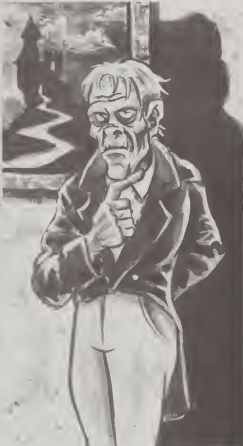
Jimmy took a few deep breaths and swallowed before knocking on the great

oak door to Oberman's study. It was at least a hundred years old and worth a small fortune. Jimmy could have got a bundle selling it to some collectors in the city and replacing it with a composite door. But Oberman wanted it restrained and left in tact.

The sound of his fist on the door echoed through the hall. He put more effort into the knock than he had intended.

A gaunt servant opened the door part way. Jimmy pushed it open all the way and walked in.

Oberman was sitting in a plush leather chair behind a desk. He had a half empty bottle of Jack Daniels in his right hand.



He had his head down, but when he brought it up to face Jimmy he had a hatred burning in his eyes.

Jimmy suddenly felt his throat go dry. The blood rushed to his feet and his whole insides felt cold.

"What?" The question sounded more like a growl from a hungry beast.

"My men and I do good work for you?"

"Your point?" He took a large gulp from the whisky bottle.

"Your demands are excessive. The pressure is too hard."

"You don't like your job?"

"No. It's a good job but your demands are too."

"What?" Oberman stood. He seemed to grow out of the chair to lean over Jimmy. Jimmy felt himself starting to shake. He swallowed hard fighting for control. He was becoming overwhelmed by the smell of the alcohol. He felt himself becoming light headed.

"We need more money," Jimmy barked out.

"More money? More? You demand more from your master?" Oberman took another gulp of whisky and slammed the empty bottle on his desk. It shattered into ice like slivers of glass.

"I hire repairmen and get infants instead. You fail to know your place in this world. My world."

Before Jimmy could respond Oberman reached out and grabbed his head in one meaty hand. And Oberman just squeezed. Jimmy tried to scream but couldn't. He felt the pressure on his brain. He knew his head would explode.

Blackness overcame him followed by a loud crack that ended his life.



by Tom Triman

In 1995, a revolutionary new home video format was unleashed upon consumers: digital versatile disks, aka DVDs. Exactly the same size as compact audio disks, DVDs use a compression process called MPEG2, which is able to store a large amount of audio and video data on a small optical disk, while maximizing image quality. Capable of containing 5.2 gigabytes of data, one DVD can hold an entire feature film over two hours long on one side.

DVDs are remarkably interactive. Many of them allow the viewer to run a film either in full-frame format or in widescreen, with alternate audio tracks and subtitles in English and a variety of other languages. Also available on many DVDs are extra features, sometimes called, "bonus materials", including behind-the-scenes featurettes, interviews, deleted footage, etc. With their superior image stability, crystal clear picture resolution and flawless sound reproduction, DVDs have rendered laserdiscs obsolete and the days of VHS videocassettes are definitely numbered.

In the late summer of 1999, Universal Studios Home Video began releasing major titles from their "Classic Monster Collection" on DVD. The first to be

digital monster disks is mostly original release poster art, but the Frankenstein DVD's package illustration is from a re-release poster. The "bonus materials" included on the Universal Monster DVDs contain a treasure-trove of information about each film and its creators that allows monster movie maniacs to celebrate these classics as never before.

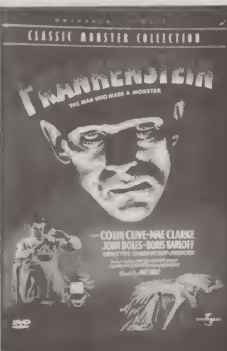
Each disk has a chapter list - selected scenes, listed chronologically, that the viewer can access at leisure. Every DVD offers production notes

DIGITAL HORROR CLASSICS: THE UNIVERSAL MONSTERS ON DVD

released were FRANKENSTEIN (1931), THE MUMMY (1932), THE BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN (1935), THE WOLF MAN (1941) and DRACULA (1931). Although all of these films have been available to collectors for decades on a variety of formats, including 8mm, Super 8 and 16mm films, as well as videocassettes and laserdiscs, they have never looked or sounded brighter, sharper or more vibrant anywhere outside of a movie theater. Devotees of these great horror classics, from the casual fan to the most serious film scholar, will be unable to resist the impulse to immerse themselves in the Universal Monster DVDs.

The package art for the Universal's

CASTLE of **FRANKENSTEIN**



and cast and filmmakers' biographies, consisting of pages of text illustrated by stills from each film, like one would find on internet "web pages".

A sub-menu of languages is also included on every disk. The only spoken language available is English. Captions for the hearing impaired are also in English. Subtitles are in French. DVD viewers can play each film either with its original soundtrack or with an alternate "feature commentary" track provided by a prominent film historian.

Included among the bonus materials on each DVD is a ten-minute poster and still

gallery, sometimes called an "archive" - a montage of original and reissue posters and lobby cards, followed by a collection of rare production photos that visually depicts the entire story of each film, bridged by dissolves and camera moves. A few frame enlargements are included among the stills, here and there. Every "archive" is accompanied by a sound montage.

Among the best features on these disks are a series of polished documentaries, each running about 45 minutes, written and directed by film historian David J. Skal, providing a wealth of behind-the-scenes filmlore and fascinating trivia from a legion of interviewed celebrities and film scholars.

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Unlike various other monster movie documentaries available on VHS videocassette, Skal's featurettes include generous film clips from each film examined, as well as appetizing scenes from many other Universal monster thrillers, rather than the usual Realart reissue preview trailers (each disk does include a Realart reissue preview trailers). Skal's documentaries would be good enough to collect by themselves and are also included on the British videocassette editions of the Universal Classic Monster Collection. The DVD of the film, GODS AND MONSTERS, contains another excellent documentary written and directed by Skal, THE WORLD OF GODS AND MONSTERS: A JOURNEY WITH JAMES WHALE.

Each disk contains a Universal web link, which allows access to Universal Studios Home Video's web site, when the disk is used as a CD ROM. For owners without a CD ROM drive, the web site itself is listed:

<http://www.universalstudios.com/home>

FRANKENSTEIN ON DVD

First to hit the video store shelves was a DVD of Universal's landmark 1931 thriller about the man who made a monster, FRANKENSTEIN. The digital FRANKENSTEIN disk is a fresh remaster of the restored edition of the film, which contains footage that was cut in the mid-thirties, including the scene in which the Monster (Boris Karloff) tosses Little Maria (Marilyn Harris) into the lake. Thanks to the wonders of film restoration and DVD technology, FRANKENSTEIN fans can now experience Whale's classic in a whole new digital dimension.

Besides the disk's decidedly superior picture and sound quality, the DVD edition of FRANKENSTEIN jolted even the most jaded fans and collectors with a million megavolts by including Colin Clive's long-censored line, "Now I know what it feels like to be God!", delivered just after Clive, as Henry Frankenstein, bestows life upon his stitched-together compilation of cadaver, the Monster (Boris Karloff). This rare bit of dialog could now be heard again in its entirety for the first time in over 60 years!



Chapter Titles: "A Word of Warning", "The Grave Robbers", "The Abnormal Brain", "The Preparations", "Frankenstein's Plan", "The Creation", "The Creature", "His Tormentor", "First Blood", "The Creature Escapes", "Maria and the Monster", "The Uninvited Guest", "To Find a Monster", "The Windmill", "Death to the Monster" and "A Toast to the Frankensteins".

The FRANKENSTEIN main menu is illustrated by a montage of images - a combination of animation and a film clip from the "mountain manhunt" sequence, as well as a briefly-glimpsed animated

photo of Karloff's Monster. This montage is scored by an excerpt from the film's main title overture.

Among the FRANKENSTEIN DVD's bonus materials are "Cast and Filmmakers' Biographies" of Boris Karloff, Colin Clive, Mae Clarke, John Boles, Edward Van Sloan, Dwight Frye and James Whale. The soundtrack of the disk's poster and still gallery, THE FRANKENSTEIN ARCHIVES, uses a combination of music, dialog and sound effects from the film. This abridged soundtrack is more substantial than the audio montage devoted to the film on Rob Zombie's THE WORDS AND MUSIC OF FRANKENSTEIN CD.

On the FRANKENSTEIN disk's Feature



Commentary audio track, film historian Rudy Behlmer offers a wealth of behind-the-scenes information on the making of the film. He describes the origin of the 1818 Mary Shelley novel "Frankenstein", its early theatrical adaptations and its silent film versions, including Thomas Edison's 1910 edition. Behlmer also provides brief biographical profiles of the film's cast and crew.

Behlmer expounds on the film's various influences, both literary and cinematic, including the 1926 silent film, *THE MAGICIAN*. Robert Florey's legendary screen test for *FRANKENSTEIN* with Bela Lugosi as the Monster is discussed, as are technician Kenneth Strickfaden's sputtering electrical effects in the laboratory scene.

Behlmer chronicles the numerous brain transplants performed on the Monster throughout the Universal series and details the application of Jack Pierce's classic Monster makeup. He depicts the evolution of the *FRANKENSTEIN* screenplay, describing passages from several early drafts and rewrites.

Behlmer comments on the film's vague, anachronistic setting. He retells the story of how and why James Whale cast Boris Karloff as the Frankenstein Monster and quotes Mae Clarke's account of Karloff's awkward ordeal while playing the Monster, both on and off screen.

Behlmer quotes Karloff's remarks about the character of the Monster, in which the actor expressed his gratitude and affection for the role that made his career. Behlmer talks about the film's phenomenal critical and box-office success in the early thirties and tells of the various censor cuts demanded for the film's 1937 rerelease.

THE FRANKENSTEIN FILES: HOW HOLLYWOOD CREATED A MONSTER

In the documentary on the *FRANKENSTEIN* disk, writer/director/host David Skal narrates the history of Universal's monster classic, from its origins as a novel by Mary Shelley, through its various early stage adaptations, finally directing full attention upon the 1931 monster movie classic. A complete chronicle of all the films in Universal's *FRANKENSTEIN* series is presented, displaying tantalizing clips from each. The late film historian Ivan Butler, a member of Hamilton



Deane's stage company, reminisces about Deane's makeup and performance as the Monster.

Karloff's daughter, Sara, details the physical toll taken on her father while filming *FRANKENSTEIN*, for which he suffered for the remainder of his life. Dwight Frye's son, Dwight D. Frye, portrays her father's career as a versatile, accomplished stage actor and reflects on his performance as Fritz, Henry Frankenstein's halfwit hunchback assistant. Film Historian Paul M. Jensen offers a cinematic analysis of *FRANKENSTEIN*, expressing his opinion that the Monster's attack on Elizabeth (Mae Clarke) in her bedroom seems illogical and contrived.

Among the graphic delights seen in *THE FRANKENSTEIN FILES* are licensed Karloff artwork by Wolf's Head Productions, Frankenstein Monster bronze and resin busts by Cine Arts' Michael Teves, a life-size Frankenstein Monster figure by KNB EFX Group and a special Frankenstein bust sculpted by Rick Baker, with which the award-winning makeup artist illustrates the meticulous application of Jack Pierce's original Frankenstein Monster makeup.

Baker appears on all the Universal

Monster DVDs, providing illuminating commentary on the work of Pierce, his childhood idol, who created all the original Universal monster makeup designs of the thirties and forties that are still marketed by the studio to this day. In *THE FRANKENSTEIN FILES*, Baker expresses his personal ambition to someday do something that approaches the brilliance of Pierce's makeup for Karloff's Monster.

BOO!

Among the bonus materials on the *FRANKENSTEIN* disk is a 1932 Universal "brevity", *BOO!*, written and directed by Albert DeMond and edited by Lynn Harrison. It consists of cleverly edited film clips from *FW Muran's* 1922 silent *NOSFERATU*, Universal's *FRANKENSTEIN* and *THE CAT CREEPS* (1930), bridged together by minimal original footage, accompanied by some topical early-thirties comic narration. The overall effect is reminiscent of Jay Ward's *FRACTURED FLICKERS* TV series of the sixties.

THE MUMMY ON DVD

The next Universal monster classic to be released on DVD was the 1932 tale of a 3,700-year old Egyptian High Priest (Boris Karloff) brought back to life, *THE MUMMY*, in tandem with the DVD



release of the studio's 1999 remake. The transfer is of a nice, unrestored print. The image is bright and clear throughout, marred only by occasional flickering. The sound reproduction is adequate, but a bit murky, compared to the crispness of the restored FRANKENSTEIN soundtrack.

Chapter Titles: "Main Titles", "A Field Expedition", "Imhotep", "Ten Years Later", "A Visitor", "The Dig", "Helen", "Doctor Muller", "The Curse", "The Scroll", "Disbelief", "Helen's Visit", "Memories", "Helping Helen", "Escape", "Ancient Rites", "Intercession" and "End Titles"

THE MUMMY's main menu is illustrated by a foreground image of Karloff as Imhotep from the original one-sheet poster. In the background, hieroglyphs slowly "scroll" by, from right to left. Above this, in the middle of the title, "KARLOFF THE UNCANNY IN THE MUMMY", looms a small, radiant head shot of Karloff's Ardath Bey, which alternately dissolves into the head of Imhotep. All this is accomplished by music from the film's original soundtrack. If you listen closely, you can hear Karloff as Ardath Bey, murmuring Ancient Egyptian spells.

THE MUMMY's bonus materials include "Cast and Filmmakers' Biographies" of Boris Karloff, Zita Johann, David Manners, Bramwell Fletcher, Arthur Byron, Edward Van Sloan and Karl Freund. The disk's poster and still gallery is accompanied by excerpts from the film's musical score.

In his feature commentary track, film scholar Paul M. Jensen minutely analyzes the action of each scene, giving praise to THE MUMMY's cinematic elements. Jensen evaluates Karloff's performance in the role of Ardath Bey, comparing it to the actor's other roles of be early thirties.

Jensen describes the screen persona of Zita Johann, who portrays Princess Anckesamenon in THE MUMMY, offering a brief biological profile of the actress. He goes on to detail the lives and careers of the film's supporting actors, as well as the crew behind the camera.

Jensen depicts several scenes that were either omitted from the script or deleted from the film's final cut, including several filmed sequences depicting Anckesamenon's reincarnations through the centuries.

Jensen examines the development of the film's story and the evolution of the script, from Nina Wilcox Putnam's contrived science fiction story, "Cagliostro", to John Balderston's polished rewrite.

Jensen discusses Karl Freund's Germanic directional style and speculates that Freund not only directed THE MUMMY, but also contributed to its screenplay. As the film concludes, Jensen singles out THE MUMMY as the one film that embodies all the elements of the classic American horror film.

MUMMY DEAREST: A HORROR TRADITION UNEARTHED

From the interior of the Vista theater, lavishly adorned with Ancient Egyptian decor, film historian

Rudy Behlmer, the host of this entertaining documentary, unwraps the story of how Ancient Egyptian High Priest Imhotep was incarnated on the screen by Boris Karloff in 1932. John Balderston, son of screenwriter John L. Balderston, recalls his father's lifelong fascination with Ancient Egypt and how, as a journalist in the early twenties, he had covered the historic opening of the tomb of Tutankhamun.

Rick Baker returns to detail Jack Pierce's laborious 8-hour Mummy makeup application on Karloff, the most uncomfortable the actor was ever required to endure. Sara Karloff confirms her father's suffering during the grueling process of being made up as Imhotep.

Several film historians, including Gregory William Mank and David Del Valle, relate THE MUMMY's fascinating production history. Both reminisce about their respective interviews with Zita Johann, a real-life mystic and occultist. Mank describes the friction between the strong-willed Johann and the film's authoritarian director, Karl Freund.

Paul M. Jensen analyzes the scene in



which Imhotep is brought back to life and examines the similarities between THE MUMMY and Universal's 1931 DRACULA, with the aid of the film clips from both. Film excerpts also summarize the saga of Kharis the Mummy, that began with Universal's THE MUMMY'S HAND (1940) and concluded with THE MUMMY'S CURSE (1944). Even Kharis the Mummy from ABBOTT AND COSTELLO MEET THE MUMMY (1955) makes a brief appearance.

The eye-catching artifacts on display in MUMMY DEAREST include a resin bust of Karloff's Imhotep by Wolf's Head Productions, an Ardath Bey bust by Tom Savini and a Mummy portrait by Aaron Sims.

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